

# Consumers' Research BULLETIN



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# CONSUMERS' RESEARCH BULLETIN

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THE MAGAZINE THAT GUIDES CONSUMER BUYING

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## Off the editor's chest

THE BALMY AIR and warm sunlight of spring stimulate many a suburban resident to start digging up the garden, transplanting roses and other shrubs, and getting the lawn in condition for the mower. The weather also seems to have a softening effect on critical judgment, judging from the number of successful rackets and frauds perpetrated on amateur gardeners at this season of the year. Each year brings a tale of woe from purchasers of rosebushes that do not live, bulbs that do not bloom, shrubs that are scrawny culms, and fertilizer that is ineffective, unsuitable, or overpriced.

The canny gardener with some years of experience behind him really knows better than to succumb to the alluring claims and impressive illustrations in the garden supplement of the Sunday newspaper or the fabulous plugs of the pitchman on the radio for some "bargain-priced" product or assortment. Although anyone who has worked with the soil knows that there are no miracles available either in plant stock, seeds, or fertilizer that make shrubs, flowers, vegetables, and lawn look like a successful Burbank experiment without the pain and suffering of digging, hoeing, weeding, spraying, watering, and the whole arduous effort involved in raising flowers and vegetables, he may in a weak moment fall for an especially appealing approach or be taken in by a slick salesman.

On the matter of fertilizer, it is well to remember that most states have comprehensive laws requiring certain standards of performance, disclosure of contents, and accuracy of claims. Before spending any sizable sum for some unfamiliar product, check with your state agricultural experiment station, where you can obtain advice not only on what kind

(Continued on page 30)

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Listings usually are arranged in alphabetical order by brand name (not in order of merit) under each quality or performance rating. A numeral 1, 2, or 3 at the end of a listing indicates relative price: 1 being low, 3 high. Where the 1, 2, 3 price ratings are given, brands in the 1, or least expensive group, are listed alphabetically, followed by brands in price group 2, also in alphabetical order, etc. A quality judgment is wholly independent of price.

## The Consumers' Observation Post

STATION WAGONS are becoming increasingly popular. What with larger families and country shopping centers, "Suburbans" are much in demand. The Wall Street Journal noted that in 1955 station wagons accounted for 12 percent of total sales of the low-priced three automobiles, but in 1957 more than 20 percent of the cars sold in the lowest price bracket are expected to be station wagons.

\* \* \*

THE FLAVOR OF CANNED VEGETABLES is adversely affected in some cases by insecticides used on the foliage or present in the soil in which they were grown. Taste tests conducted by K. G. Weckel, John Birdsall, and R. K. Chapman at the University of Wisconsin indicated that lindane in the soil was responsible for poor flavor of canned carrots, onions, and potatoes, but it apparently had no adverse effect on flavor when it was applied to the foliage of potatoes. Chlordane on foliage produced an off-flavor in canned onions, and affected the flavor of canned potatoes when used in the soil. The taste of canned snap beans and tomato juice appeared to be unaffected by the insecticides. The most sensitive of all canned vegetables were found to be canned pumpkins, sauerkraut, and beets.

\* \* \*

CARPETS, like automobiles, can be handled on a trade-in basis, reports Retailing Daily. Market studies made by a carpet mill and a trade association indicated that a trade-in offer is not only effective in promoting sales of new carpet, but the used merchandise can be conditioned for resale in a large percentage of cases. The trade-in offer was found to be particularly popular with families who were moving to another location where their carpets, though still usable, were unsuitable for one reason or another.

\* \* \*

REMOVAL OF SUPERFLUOUS HAIR on the face by the use of home electrolysis equipment was reported unsuccessful in the case of a patient of a British physician. In a letter to the British Medical Journal, the doctor noted that the apparatus caused "pain and some pit marks," but no loosening of the hairs. In reply, the editor pointed out that failure of electrolysis was undoubtedly due to a lack of skill on the part of the operator and that it was essential for the needle to be placed accurately into the hair follicle without undue force or the treatment would cause slight scarring, without affecting the hair. The advice applies equally well to home electrolysis treatments in the U.S.

\* \* \*

BAKERS in northern Maine, New York, and Michigan are seeking legislative relief from Congress because they are suffering from competition with Canadian bread. It appears that Canadian bakers buy wheat at \$1 per hundredweight less than the U.S. price-supported grain and can therefore sell bread at retail for less than the U.S. wholesale price. Bread now comes in duty free, and the American Bakers Association has petitioned Congress to do something about the situation to keep U.S. consumers from buying the cheaper Canadian bread.

\* \* \*

EXTENSIVE DERMATITIS OF THE HANDS was suffered by a New Hampshire physician's patient whenever she came in contact with chlorinated water, hypochlorites, and other chlorine bleaching compounds. He reported that the condition seemed to clear up when she moved to an area with an unchlorinated water supply. He noted that free chlorine can be removed by boiling or by allowing water to stand in a tub or dishpan overnight, but obviously this is hardly a practical method for the woman who washes dishes or clothes, or takes a hot bath.

**TAFFETA DRESSES** sometimes lose their crispness in dry cleaning. The National Institute of Drycleaning has called the attention of its members to the fact that loom-finished taffetas may also become limp where spots and stains have been removed. Recently the Institute alerted its members to difficulties with a new type of taffeta which loses crispness when finished with steam and which loses stiffness noticeably with each successive cleaning. It is impossible for a dry cleaner to predict just how a particular taffeta will perform, and consumers will be well advised to get some kind of guarantee from the shop where the garment is purchased that it may be returned for full credit if it does not dry clean satisfactorily.

\* \* \*

**AN UNUSUAL CASE OF LEAD POISONING** affecting a man and his wife in an Eastern city has been reported by the American Medical Association. The symptoms were diagnosed with some difficulty first in the husband and then in his wife. After hospital treatment, both showed improvement. The wife returned home, but in little more than a week was forced to go back for treatment. Both eventually made a satisfactory recovery, but were somewhat puzzled over what had been the cause of their trouble. Investigation finally disclosed that one possible cause was some brightly colored highball glasses recently purchased that had been used for drinks several times a week. Tests of the glasses using a solution of 20 percent alcohol in water showed 11 mg. of lead per sample in the first test; 7 mg. of lead in the second; and 3 mg. of lead in the third.

\* \* \*

**POWER LAWN MOWERS** are now considered as essential for the well-run suburban place as an electric refrigerator or vacuum cleaner. The rotary type, which is the more popular, is often dangerous and has been the cause of a number of serious accidents, even fatalities. Safety precautions for use issued by the Institute for Safer Living of the American Mutual Liability Insurance Company stress the importance of raking the lawn before using a rotary mower to eliminate stones, wire, or other debris that might inflict a serious blow when flung by the whirling blades. The user should keep pace with the mower at all times. He should never let children play around it when it is in motion or leave the motor running with the clutch disengaged. The Lawn Mower Institute, which is concerned with the problem of safety involved in the use of its members' products, has not only set up a program of users' education, but has also sponsored the development of a code of safety standards for lawn mowers under the guidance of the American Standards Association. Where there is special need for the greatest possible safety, particularly when there are a number of children in the family, it is CR's recommendation that the reel-type rather than the rotary-type of mower be selected. (Reel mowers may cause accidents, but such accidents are of relatively infrequent occurrence.)

\* \* \*

**RUG AND CARPET ADVERTISING** should clearly disclose fiber content. That's the suggestion of the Cincinnati Better Business Bureau, which also urges that the percentage content of each fiber of a multiple-fiber rug be given. When only one fiber is mentioned, the Bureau holds that the consumer has a right to expect that the rug is made entirely of that fiber. The Bureau reports that in Cincinnati the terms "viscose" and "tweed" have been much misused in carpet advertising.

\* \* \*

**ATTRACTIVE BOTTLES AND PACKAGES, AS WELL AS VENDING MACHINES FOR DRUGS** are frowned upon by the Committee on Toxicology of the American Medical Association. The Committee pointed out that devices intended to tempt children to accept drugs as something other than medicine may have unfortunate consequences, and criticized a clown-shaped medicine bottle, the promotion of vitamin pills as sweets, and the distribution of aspirin by vending machines. Since such machines operate unattended, the Committee noted that there is danger the children may confuse the aspirin-dispensing device with machines that dispense gum and candy.

(The continuation of this section is on page 33)





## Oven cleaners

Some work—some are not so good



THE ADVENT of the new spray-on oven cleaner has added several new names to the list of cleaners sold for getting rid of the thick greasy coating in gas and electric ovens. Oven cleaners have become quite popular with the housewife, because in many instances they have enabled her for the first time to remove the tough, hard brown coating with a reasonable amount of time and effort. Removing this coating from the surfaces of an oven, caused by grease from broiling and roasting meats over a period of time, can hardly be done by ordinary cleaning methods available in the home. Though an oven can be closed from view, the greasy coating left in it will often make itself known by the smoke when it is heated. This smoke may fill the kitchen and perhaps adjoining rooms with unpleasant odors. A clean oven is not only more pleasant to use but it is also more efficient, particularly when the inside of the oven is white or light in color.

There are other methods which have been recommended for removing the burned-on grease. One is to wash the oven with a dilute solution of household ammonia. Another is to leave a dish of ammonia in a closed oven overnight so that the fumes will tend to loosen the hard brown coating. While some of these methods help, a

lot of rubbing with steel wool or some other similar abrasive is still required to do a satisfactory job. The use of steel wool or an abrasive should be avoided so far as possible, as porcelain finishes are readily deteriorated by any harsh treatment.

Several cleaners are available to the housewife which will allow her to clean the porcelain-enamel surfaces inside the oven with little or no scrubbing or scraping. Some of these, *Easy-Off* for example, are well known. Any of this class of cleaners, however, should be applied with full knowledge of the manufacturers' directions, for ease of application, household safety, and best cleaning action.

The most effective cleaners are in the form of pastes, some quite thin and some quite thick or viscous. A cleaner which is too thin or too thick will be difficult to apply; in one instance there is the problem of the cleaner running on a vertical surface, and collecting at the bottom, while in the other it is difficult to spread the cleaner completely and evenly without repeated brushings. The paste cleaners must be spread with a sponge or brush over the porcelain-enamel surface to be cleaned, and allowed to stand for a period of time (some need up to three hours, depending on the cleaner and the amount of grease coating). The material is then removed with a

wet cloth or sponge which needs to be rinsed repeatedly and used again, until the surface is clean. To make the job easier, and to insure thorough rinsing, plenty of clean water to which some vinegar has been added should be used for rinsing the cloth or sponge.

Oven cleaners generally contain a caustic chemical, such as sodium hydroxide (caustic soda, such as is used in drain cleaners), and thus are very strongly alkaline and caustic. The user should wear rubber gloves during application and during rinsing, being careful to avoid getting the cleaner or rinse water on the skin. Clothing, linoleum, or other floor covering should also be protected. Not even the slightest trace must be allowed to get into the eyes, either directly, or by contact with the fingers. The highly alkaline paste cleaners should never be used on anything made of aluminum, and care should be taken to avoid getting the material on any painted, enameled, or varnished surface.

It is extremely important that an oven cleaner be stored where children cannot possibly find or reach the package, since the typical oven cleaner contains a caustic alkali that can burn the skin, lips, or throat. Many children have been gravely burned by eating or drinking or spilling on themselves products containing caustic alkali. The child must also, of course, be kept from any contact with the oven surface while it is allowed to stand for a time with the cleaner on it.

The newer spray-on oven cleaners are, in general, more expensive, and while perhaps more convenient to apply, were found not to remove the grease as well as the more familiar paste cleaners. Moreover, they required the use of steel wool, which not only involves the possibility of damaging the surface, but fails to eliminate the unpleasant scrubbing job many women would like to avoid. The solvent of the spray-on cleaners was not determined by CR because this type of cleaner did not work as well as the paste type. (The solvent used may, we believe, have been a chlorinated hydrocarbon.) However, when one of the spray-on cleaners is used, the user should follow directions on the can and by all means provide for good ventilation.

Unless otherwise mentioned in the listings, the cleaners had an odor that was not considered objectionable.

#### A. Recommended

**de-GREASE-It** (Meirett Inc., P.O. Box 361, Danbury, Conn.) 16-oz. jar, 98c. Effectiveness in removing grease, good. Thick paste ("dry" and similar in consistency to tooth paste), somewhat difficult to spread for effective cleansing. Recommended waiting time, 30 minutes. Had an unpleasant odor.

**Easy-Off** (Boyle-Midway Inc., Cranford, N.J.) 16-oz. jar, 98c. Effectiveness in removing grease, good. Paste is of good consistency; spreads easily and covers well. Recommended waiting time, 2 to 3 hours. Had an unpleasant odor.

**E-Z-EST** (E-Z-Est Products Co., 2528 Adeline St., Oakland 7, Calif.) 9-oz. jar, 69c. Effectiveness in removing grease, good. Thick paste, and like *de-GREASE-It*, somewhat difficult to spread. Recommended waiting time, 30 minutes.

**ITS Oven Cleaner** (Earl Grissmer Co., P.O. Box 5992, Indianapolis) 16-oz. jar, \$1. Effectiveness in removing grease, good. Paste is of good consistency; spreads easily and covers well. Recommended waiting time, 2 to 3 hours. Had an unpleasant odor.

**Korex Oven Cleaner** (The Korex Co., 523 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale 20, Mich.) 17-oz. jar, 98c. Effectiveness in removing grease, good. Paste of good consistency; spreads easily and covers well. Recommended waiting time, 1 or 2 hours. Had an unpleasant odor.

**Lewal's Oven Cleaner** (Lewal Industries, Inc., 114 E. 32 St., New York 16) 16-oz. jar, 98c. Effectiveness in removing grease, good. Thin paste, easily spread, but it was difficult to cover the surfaces because of the paste's tendency to run. Recommended waiting time, 2 hours. Had an unpleasant odor.

**Quick 'n BRITE** (My-Ko Chemical Corp., 1255 N. Sixth St., Milwaukee 12) 16-oz. jar, 98c. Effectiveness in removing grease, good. Paste of good consistency; spreads easily and covers well. Recommended waiting time before removal, 1 to 2 hours. Had no odor.

\* \* \*

**Easy-Aid** (G. N. Coughlan Co., 29 Spring St., West Orange, N.J.) 16-oz. jar, 98c. Effectiveness in removing grease, fair. Paste was somewhat thick, but spreads fairly easily and covers fairly well. Recommended waiting time, 10 to 30 minutes. This cleaner worked better when allowed to stay on the surface 1 hour or more. When the recommended waiting time was used, *Easy-Aid* did not remove grease as well as cleaners listed under A. Recommended.

#### C. Not Recommended

All of the following five were relatively ineffective in removing grease unless the surface was rubbed with steel wool. The four spray-on cleaners all had objectionable odors.

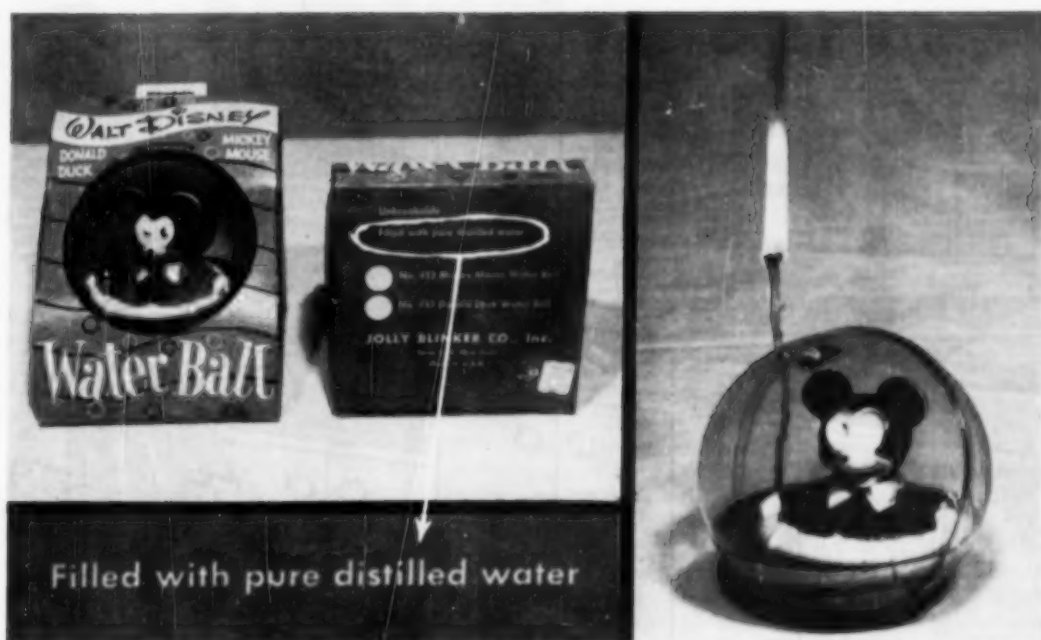
**Hep Safe-T-Spray** (Bostwick Laboratories, Inc., Bridgeport 5, Conn.) 12-oz. spray-on can, \$1.49.

**Krust-Off** (Bandwagon Mfg., Inc., 409 Summer St., Boston 10) 12-oz. spray-on can, 90c.

**Sea Spray** (O-Cedar, Div. American-Marietta Co., 2246 W. 49 St., Chicago 9) 12-oz. spray-on can, \$1.49.

**Spee-Dee** (DeMert & Dougherty, Inc., 3001 W. 47 St., Chicago 32) 6-oz. spray-on can, 89c.

**Gumption** (Made in England; distributed by Irval Associates, 23 Bridge St., New York 4) 12-oz. can, 98c. This was an abrasive paste.



*This toy is called a "Water Ball," and the descriptive material on the carton shown claims it is "Filled with distilled water." Actually the liquid was a form of petroleum oil, similar to fuel oil or kerosene, as can be seen by the flaming wick. (Wick supplied by CR to illustrate nature of the liquid contents of the ball.)*

## Don't put your trust in the label; it may mislead you

CR HAS FOR MANY YEARS warned consumers against accepting a product as always being what the manufacturer claims it to be, even though his claim may appear in advertising circulars or on the carton. In many instances the claims are justified and the consumer receives what is promised. Products are offered from time to time, however, whose descriptions or claims do not at all match the actual item delivered. For this reason, consumers should exercise caution at all times in connection with their purchases when an important element of utility or safety is involved; they should not assume that what the label says will necessarily be so.

The label of the box of a transparent ball sold as a toy for young children presents an interesting instance of outright misrepresentation by a manufacturer. The ball, about four inches in diameter, contains a liquid and a floating figure of Mickey Mouse. On the carton, among the printed material, is the claim that the ball is "Filled with pure distilled water." A check of

this liquid, however, revealed that it was not distilled water but a form of petroleum oil, similar to kerosene or fuel oil.

Many parents would be tempted to buy such a toy for their children and certainly would regard it as perfectly safe to do so upon reading on the box that it contained distilled water. On the other hand, those who would take the trouble to read the wording on the package would be pretty likely to hesitate to buy such a product if the package revealed that it contained fuel oil or some other similar and combustible material, or a poisonous liquid.

While the ball is sealed where the two halves come together, there still is the danger that the seal will be broken or punctured by accident or intent, and that the contents will be spilled on the child or that the child will drink some of the liquid. The ball, while it prominently displays the *Disney* name on the carton, was, according to the label on the box, manufactured by Jolly Blinker Co., Inc., New York City, and sells for \$1, in retail stores.



## Built-in gas cooking units

THE PAST YEAR has seen a tremendous rise in the popularity of built-in cooking units. Since they are a relatively new development and much admired by homemakers as means to dress up a kitchen, they are widely used as forceful sales promoters in many new-home developments. The "built-ins" are also serving as justification for many kitchen remodeling jobs. There is little doubt that the built-in equipment contributes to the modern look of a kitchen, and if you are one who wants very much to keep up with the Joneses, you may consider an up-to-the-minute looking kitchen pretty nearly a must.

Consumers' Research feels that many homemakers would be well advised to spend some time to investigate the advantages and disadvantages connected with built-in cooking appliances before deciding on their purchase. (We gladly concede that they make a much-admired contribution to kitchen decor.)

Some of the advantages claimed for built-in gas ovens and counter-top burners are real; the validity of other sales arguments may be dependent upon the size or shape of the space available in a kitchen and upon the work habits of the homemaker. Certainly, the heat introduced into the room by use of an oven is undesirable except possibly in the wintertime. With separate built-in sections, the counter-top burners may be located in the main kitchen working area and the oven located apart from it, so that the heat given off by the oven will be less bothersome. On the other hand, in homes where the oven and broiler are much used, the separate arrangement may prove to be less desirable than it initially appeared to be, because it will mean extra steps when baked or broiled items are being prepared along with food cooked on surface burners.

There is no doubt that the waist-high place-



ment of a built-in oven has advantages over the common oven-and-broiler-in-range arrangement, with the oven set low. Doing away with the need for stooping or bending when using the oven obviously saves the homemaker's energy and reduces the likelihood of mishandling hot pans and dishes or burning the hands on hot surfaces. The oven cleaning job will also be more readily accomplished.

One disadvantage of the new designs to be considered is important—the relatively high initial cost of the equipment itself when the cost for installation is considered. (Installation of separate units in a new home may cost several hundred dollars more than putting in a conventional range. Conversion of an existing single unit installation to a separate oven and counter-top arrangement, involving as it usually does a complete kitchen remodeling job, may easily cost several thousand dollars.) Another disadvantage is inflexibility of placement. With a regular range, the homemaker can rearrange her kitchen in many instances, if she cares to, after a period of years, without going to any great expense. But with built-in appliances, once a particular kitchen plan has been adopted, any change that is found to be needed to improve efficiency, workability, or convenience is likely to be a very costly one compared with a shift of position of a “free-standing” range.

With a normal built-in installation, there will be a loss in available floor space, in space available for useful everyday storage, and in counter space. The kitchen plan should provide for at least two feet of counter space next to the oven so that a convenient area is available on which to set hot pans and dishes after their removal from the oven. A similar area is needed beside the surface units if they are separated some distance from the oven. Such areas, which are a built-in part of the usual range, should be surfaced with a heat-resistant material. Ceramic tile or other substances which will not deteriorate, char, or be disfigured when a hot pan or grill is placed on them should be used. Linoleum, wood, and hard-surfaced materials such as most plastics (a few are heat resistant) are not suitable for this use. Monel metal or stainless steel is best not used, for a number of reasons, chief of which is the extra shock hazard occasioned by the presence of grounded metal near electrical equipment, which of course applies as well to modern gas stoves and ovens that have timers, lamps, or other features operated by electricity.

And don't be misled into believing that because of a new and “efficient” appearance the built-in oven and range-top appliances will pro-

For reasons of lack of space, the complete results of the tests and a tabulation of the various characteristics of the built-in units do not appear in the present article. They will be included in Part II of this article, which will be published in a forthcoming *Bulletin*. Very brief listings by model number only are included (see page 12) for the benefit of readers who wish to make their selection before the more complete information is available.

vide faster cooking or baking and more efficient use of gas or electricity than the usual kitchen range. Built-ins offer no advantage at all, from the standpoint of quality or speed of cooking. High-heat-output burners are available in both kinds of range, and Consumers' Research found that there was no consistent difference in cooking efficiency between the burners employed on the regular gas ranges tested and reported in the November 1956 CONSUMERS' RESEARCH BULLETIN\* and those used in the built-in counter-top units reported in this article. Indeed, several manufacturers who make both types use similar or identical burners on them.

In recent years, manufacturers of both gas and electric ranges have been constantly changing the designs of their cooking-top elements in order to reduce the time required to bring to a boil the various items cooked. It is the time to boil a fixed quantity of water that determines “speed of cooking” on any stove. CR should perhaps point out that, while time to boil is shortened by increased heat input, whether it be with a gas or electric range, present designs likely represent a safe and reasonable compromise of the several factors involved. Nonetheless, press announcements indicate that some gas and electric range manufacturers, in their efforts to provide a talking point against the offerings of the competition, have been thinking of increasing the hourly heat input to large burners to 18,000 Btu and 2600 watts, respectively. (At present, typical figures for such burners are 12,000 Btu, and 2000 watts, for a large burner. These values are entirely sufficient for surface burners of a domestic range.)

Some manufacturers of cooking utensils, on hearing this, have raised the question as to

\*Subscribers will find much information of general interest pertaining to the use of gas-operated cooking appliances in that *Bulletin*, as well as ratings of 12 gas ranges.

whether or not their pots and pans could stand up over this additional heat. There is also a question of what the extra heat will do, in time, to the range top itself, and whether the burner heads can stand up. Some manufacturers, in fact, have gone back to using cast-iron heads because they found under many present-day conditions of use that the cast aluminum machined heads were not showing satisfactory durability in service. As one daily paper very nicely expressed it, "increased speed in ranges is even less necessary than in automobiles."

### Installation

There are certain safety precautions which must be taken in installing any cooking appliance. Top burners, for example, must be located at safe distances from combustible materials. It is important, therefore, that manufacturers' instructions for installation of any built-in gas appliance be followed with the greatest care and attention. Don't entrust the matter to the contractor and then forget about it. See to it personally—while the work is being done—that directions are followed exactly and that the instructions and drawings covering the installation are delivered to you by the contractor when the job is finished.

The minimum distances for clearance given in the manufacturer's instructions are based upon tests by the manufacturer and also by skilled engineers at the American Gas Association Laboratories. No installer should be permitted to deviate from these because he thinks he knows how to do it better. Failure to allow proper clearances and to follow exactly instructions for gas piping and electric wiring may result in a fire of a particularly dangerous and difficult

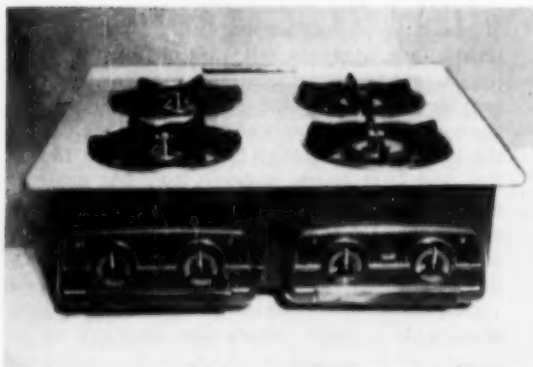
type. It is also possible that local building codes will include provisions for acceptable installation. Naturally, such codes must be complied with even though their provisions may be more stringent than the installer may think warranted.

It is quite important that top burner units be carefully leveled when installed, so that cooking utensils placed on them will be level. Otherwise fats used in frying will flow toward the low side of the pan, making this cooking operation difficult or unsatisfactory.

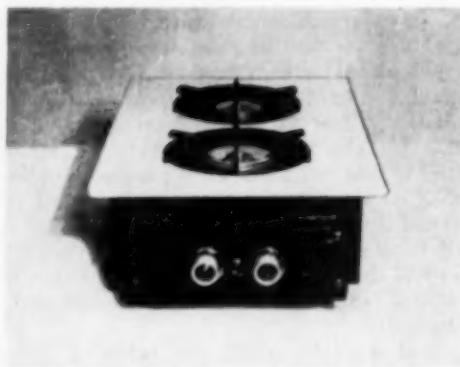
A suggested inclusion for each oven and top unit is an approved type shut-off valve which should be installed in the gas line just ahead of the pipe connections to the surface burner units and oven if both use the same inlet connection. If the two units are installed separately, each should be equipped with its own shut-off valve. In either instance, the valve should be readily available in the kitchen beneath a counter or towards the front in an uncongested cabinet, for example, so that the homemaker can turn off the gas supply to the cooking or oven units or both quickly and easily if some untoward incident or danger requires it.

### Oven installation

Any oven intended to be built in should be provided by the manufacturer with adequate insulation. An oven which has been tested by the American Gas Association Laboratories and carries the A.G.A. Seal of Approval will have sufficient insulation and be so constructed that the partition surfaces against which it is placed when installed will not become too hot. While the rise in temperature of these surfaces allowed by the test standards is generous, Consumers'



*A common arrangement for a four-burner built-in counter-top unit.*



*A typical two-burner built-in gas cooking top.*

Research found in its own tests of the ovens (in a test enclosure similar to that employed by the American Gas Association Laboratories) that surface temperatures in the enclosure were in all instances well below those permitted. (The conditions of the test employed were somewhat more severe than those used by the A.G.A.)

It was found during the tests that the hottest area in or on the partitioned enclosure in which the tests were made was, in most instances, the wall surface immediately above the oven vent at the front of the oven (the area which would correspond to the doors of a cabinet often built above such an oven). The temperatures attained on this surface (up to 150 degrees in some cases) indicate that subscribers would be well advised to employ a heat-resistant finish on that particular area.

Several studies have been made to determine the proper height for a built-in oven. In one report, it was generally agreed that the distance from the kitchen floor to the bottom of the baking and roasting compartment of the oven should be about 34 inches for persons between five feet two inches and five feet five inches in height. Naturally, persons of shorter or longer stature should inform their contractors of the heights they desire, before roughing-in operations are started.

While the specific location of built-in appliances in a kitchen will be dependent mainly upon the wishes of the homeowner, there are certain limitations in placement which should be observed because of the possible hazards involved. A range top, for example, should be at least 18 inches horizontally from a curtained window (it is best not to curtain any kitchen window that is near a range or oven). Light breezes through an open window have often blown a curtain over the open burner flame or burning grease in a pan and set fire to a home. Or the curtain may fall off or be pulled off its rod, by a child or animal, and so start a fire, with either a gas or electric range.

It is a good idea to install a vented hood or an exhaust fan or both at a proper height above the burners so that cooking odors and heat are quickly removed from the kitchen.

CR advises at least three to four feet separation between a gas range top and the bottom of an exhaust fan. A fan if installed closer to the range may affect burner and oven performance. A fan and its housing should be inspected frequently (at least twice a year) and thoroughly cleaned if needed. Accumulations of grease condensed from the air passing through the fan can soon build up to the point where a fire hazard develops. Care in this respect is particularly



*The Chambers separate oven was designed for what is called "stack-on" installation. With accessory strips, available at extra cost, it can be built in.*

important with installations in which the fan is not located in an outside wall and duct-work is employed to carry fumes over a ceiling, for example, to the outdoors.

It is also recommended—and it is one of the installation requirements of the National Board of Fire Underwriters—that a vertical clearance of 36 inches be maintained between the cooking top and any combustible construction materials. If the underside of such combustible construction is protected with asbestos millboard at least one-quarter inch thick covered with sheet metal of not less than No. 28 U.S. gauge, the distance may be decreased, but should be not less than 24 inches. Practically, this requirement eliminates cupboards or shelving above a gas range or counter-top section. Nevertheless, one will often see such a design for a modern kitchen pictured in advertisements of kitchen equipment.

While the National Board of Fire Underwriters' installation requirements do allow cabinet construction above ovens, ranges, and counter-top elements, CR feels that the spaces above these units are best left unused. The possibility always exists that the person using the kitchen may use a step-stool or something similar but less desirable to put articles away in cabinets or to remove articles at a time when the oven or cooking-top elements are burning or the front of the oven is hot. The possibility of suffering a bad burn or even of having clothing catch fire is not remote in such a situation.



Except for finish and minor differences in treatment, the built-in ovens were closely similar in general design. The Florence, shown in the picture, was typical of the ovens tested.

### CR's tests

The tests completed for the evaluation of the built-in gas cooking components were similar to those employed in the tests of gas ranges reported in the November 1956 CONSUMERS' RESEARCH BULLETIN. Tests were carried out to determine burner efficiency and speed of heating. Each oven-broiler unit was tested in an enclosure so constructed as to simulate an actual installation and to permit studies of possible effects of the ovens in overheating adjacent woodwork. Speed of heating, evenness of temperature distribution, and thermostat accuracy were checked; baking tests were carried out also. In addition, the evenness of heat distribution in the broiler was determined. During the engineering examination, the various factors which combine to make an oven or top element convenient to use were evaluated.

The ratings that follow are based principally upon performance characteristics and engineering examinations of the models listed. The reader may find, however, if cost of gas for operation is not an important consideration, that some of the models which are listed as *B. Intermediate* may be as desirable as those which received *A-Recommended* ratings.

### Built-in ovens

#### A. Recommended

**Chambers, Model 1W** (Chambers Ranges, Inc., 2464 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis) \$280 or \$320, depending upon finish.

**Roper, Model 530 KA** (Geo. D. Roper Corp., Rockford, Ill.) \$298 to \$308, depending upon finish.

#### B. Intermediate

**Caloric, Model CP-CW-MC-X** (Caloric Stove Corp., Topton, Pa.) \$198.

**Florence, Model 153108** (Florence Stove Co., Chicago 54) \$176.

**Kenmore, Model 834.5260** (Sears-Roebuck's Cat. No. 1772) \$170 retail; \$155, plus freight, in catalog.

**Magic Chef, Model 4A-21** (Magic Chef, Inc., St. Louis 10) \$180 or \$190, depending upon finish.

**Tappan, Model OKLAV-33-1** (Tappan Stove Co., Mansfield, Ohio) \$268.

**Welbilt, Model 5030** (Welbilt Corp., Maspeth 78, N.Y.) \$255 complete with Model 525 surface unit.

### Counter-top cooking units

#### A. Recommended

**Kenmore, Model 834.5760** (Sears-Roebuck's Cat. No. 1778) \$65 retail; \$60, plus freight, in catalog. Four burners.

#### B. Intermediate

**Caloric, Model BR4-T** (Caloric Stove Corp., Topton, Pa.) \$129. Four burners (one with thermal control).

**Chambers, Model 24-4GC** (Chambers Ranges, Inc., 2464 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis) \$180 or \$200, depending upon finish. Four burners. Model 42-4BB (\$300 or \$360) is similarly constructed but different in appearance (42 in. wide) and includes broiler-griddle unit.

**Florence, Model A124108** (Florence Stove Co., Chicago 54) \$104. Four burners.

**Roper, Model 540 TC** (Geo. D. Roper Corp., Rockford, Ill.) \$61. Two burners.

**Tappan, Model TNS-5-J** (Tappan Stove Co., Mansfield, Ohio) \$165. Four burners.

#### C. Not Recommended

**Magic Chef, Model 3A-20** (Magic Chef, Inc., St. Louis 10) \$55 or \$65, depending upon finish. Two burners.

**Welbilt, Model 525** (Welbilt Corp., Maspeth 78, N.Y.) \$255 complete for surface unit and Model 5030 oven. Four burners.



## The way we wash our clothes

ANY ONE OF A DOZEN different ways is the way we wash our clothes in an automatic washer nowadays. Some of the newer machines not only have two different time cycles, but also offer two-speed agitation and extraction. Many of them also give the user a choice in the selection of the temperature of the water—cold, warm, or hot.

In these ways, washing machine manufacturers are trying to reduce the amount of hand laundering the homemaker must do, and to banish "hand-wash-and-drip-dry" clothing from the bathroom towel racks. The slow speed of the agitator is supposed to simulate hand washing and reduce the wear and tear on delicate garments. The slower spin speeds during extraction are said to help save ironing by not setting wrinkles in the warm, wet fabrics. During the recent study of automatic washing machines\*, Consumers' Research did a controlled laboratory wash test using eight different combinations of settings on the machines. Eight blouses made of a punched-out Dacron fabric and eight slips made of nylon tricot were paired and each set washed separately in order to obtain some information on the effect of water temperature, speed of agitator, and length of the wash cycle on the appearance and durability of the garment.

Each set was washed in a wash load of the weight recommended for the automatic washer, the remainder of the load being made up of nylon sheets and small-sized test cloths of nylon, rayon, acetate, and Dacron.

### Effect of water temperature

The garments washed in cold water or warm water showed less wrinkling than those washed in hot water. All the garments washed in hot water were badly wrinkled and required ironing right from the very first laundering, regardless of the length of cycle or the speed of the agitator and the spinning basket.

Blouses and slips washed in warm water were moderately wrinkled.

Of the two garments washed in cold water, the slip needed ironing after the first washing, but the blouse did not. The blouse in fact was never ironed through the seven wearings and washings it received during the study. After the seventh laundering, however, it was retired because,

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| Hot water<br>Regular cycle<br>Regular speed | Warm water<br>Regular cycle<br>Regular speed | Cold water<br>Short cycle<br>Slow speed      |
| Hot water<br>Regular cycle<br>Slow speed    | Warm water<br>Short cycle<br>Slow speed      | Cold water<br>Regular cycle<br>Regular speed |
| Hot water<br>Short cycle<br>Slow speed      | Warm water<br>Short cycle<br>Regular speed   | Cold water<br>Regular cycle<br>Slow speed    |
| Hot water<br>Short cycle<br>Regular speed   | Warm water<br>Regular cycle<br>Slow speed    | Cold water<br>Short cycle<br>Regular speed   |

with the cold-water washing, it was too soiled around the collar and around the edges of the sleeves, where soiling is always more pronounced.

The test was not conclusive, but it seems clear that, when garments are washed in cold water, special attention should be given to areas that are especially soiled.

For cold-water washing, it would also be better to use one of the liquid laundry detergents instead of a powdered detergent. The powdered detergent that was used in CR's study sometimes did not dissolve fully during the washing cycle. Unfortunately, no liquid laundry detergent was available in the Washington, N.J., area at the time the study was conducted. (Brand names of some of the new liquid laundry detergents are *Wisk*, *Biz*, and *Hum*.)

### Effect of length of cycle

The length of the washing time seemed to make very little difference in the need for ironing. The slips washed for the regular length of time showed very little to moderate wrinkling in the first laundering, whether they were washed in cold water or warm water. On the other hand, those washed in hot water were badly wrinkled right from the start, whether a short or the regular cycle was used.

### Effect of the speed of the agitator and spin speed

So far as could be determined in this limited study, there was no effect due to the speed of

\*Consumers' Research Bulletin, January 1957.



From left to right: Blouses washed in hot, hot, warm, and cold water, after the first wearing and laundering.  
 Far left: hot water, short cycle, slow speed.  
 Second: hot water, regular cycle, regular speed.  
 Third: warm water, short cycle, slow speed.  
 Right: cold water, short cycle, slow speed.

the agitator. It was thought that the blouses which were made of punched-out Dacron fabric would hold up better if the agitator speeds were slow. In the test, however, the fabrics of the blouses that were washed with the agitator at slow speed began failing under the arms and across the back just about as soon as they did on other blouses that were washed with the agitator at normal speed.

Differences caused by the speed of the agitator might have been more noticeable if some woolen articles had been included in the study. Studies have shown that rubbing, pounding, and agitation are among the primary causes of shrinkage in woolens. It is important, therefore, to keep the agitation in washing down to an absolute minimum to minimize shrinkage of wool fabrics.

### Any conclusions?

For laundering most dirty clothes, only hot water will do. It isn't much good to have clothing that is unwrinkled, but still dirty, after laundering. On the other hand, cold-water washing is certainly feasible for garments that are lightly soiled, and it will reduce the amount of ironing required.

It is probably a good idea to make some effort to control the water temperature whenever you wash garments made of synthetic fibers. CR found that much more wrinkling took place in the Dacron and nylon garments washed in water at 140 degrees as compared with the same clothes washed at 100°F. Taking the temperature of the wash water may be well worth the trouble, when it saves you some time and effort in ironing.

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## Mercury, Oldsmobile, and Buick



Mercury Monterey

### Mercury

#### General comments

For many years *Mercury* has been essentially a dressed-up, beefed-up *Ford*. This year things have changed, and *Mercury* has little in common with the *Fords*, and the car is now in real competition with *Buick* and *Oldsmobile*. From a distance it is difficult to tell whether the *Mercury* is coming or going, as the front and rear bumpers are of much the same design. This is definitely disadvantageous from the safety standpoint. The hood ornament is a small one and would probably snap off if it struck a pedestrian. The headlights have dangerously sharp hoods.

The horn ring on the steering wheel is below the spokes, which is a good feature because it would yield in the event of a crash where the operator might strike the steering wheel.

Speedometer indicator is of the moving-bar type, similar to *Buick's*, and easy to read. The control levers and buttons have some sharp edges and are not too well finished. The other instruments are hard to read and pick up much light reflection.

Warning lights (very bright) are used instead of gauges for ammeter and oil pressure.

The ash tray, located on the dash, is badly positioned for the driver. The glove compartment is rather small; its door opens upward and has a catch that may be used to lock it in the open position. The foot-operated parking brake is so close to the dimmer switch that use of the

dimmer switch would easily result at times in an accidental application of the parking brake; this is considered a hazardous arrangement.

The blower and defroster operated satisfactorily, but the blower fan had an annoying high-pitched whine when operated at its top speed.

In order to use the armrest on the driver's side of this car, the driver is required to sit in a position to the left of the center of the steering wheel; this position for some persons may not be the safest and most comfortable for operation of the car. Air vents were very noisy, and there was a pronounced wind whistle at the doorjambs at 60 miles per hour and over.

The seat positioning lever was very hard to operate with the door closed. The crank handle for raising and lowering the window on the driver's side is located in such a position that, in using the crank, the hand may strike the N/S (Neutral-Start) button of the automatic transmission control. There was extreme distortion of view through the corners of the windshield and through the top of the rear window, and the rear-view mirror was not wide enough to give a view of the rear fenders or of the full length of the rear window. Windshield wiper coverage was poor (see Figure 1).

#### Performance on road tests

The *Mercury*, with its engine rated at 255 horsepower (an increase of 45 horsepower over last year's model), surprisingly did not give quite as fast acceleration as the lower-powered 1956



Figure 1—Windshield wiper coverage was poor on the Mercury.

model. We have been informed that, to improve acceleration, the rear axle ratio of *Mercury* cars having automatic transmissions has been changed from 2.91 to 1 to a ratio of 3.22 to 1. The following figures were obtained on a car with the 2.91:1 ratio. Acceleration times were: from 0 to 30 miles per hour, 4.6 seconds; from 0 to 60, 12.3; from 20 to 50, 7.1; from 40 to 60, 7.3; more than adequate in spite of the low rear axle ratio.

The automatic transmission operated satisfactorily, but there was a pronounced lurch when it shifted to the highest range.

The push-button control for the automatic transmission, in addition to the Drive, Low, and Reverse buttons, has an N/S (Neutral-Start) button, an emergency-brake release bar, and in early production models had a bar marked "Park" which was pushed in to lock the automatic transmission when the car was parked, and pulled out to release it.

Recent models have been coming through with this "Park" bar removed, and we are informed that dealers have been instructed to remove this "Park" control from all *Mercury* cars in stock and those that have been sold. (The control fault may be corrected and the "Park" used again in later production.) Apparently, if a driver neglected to pull out the "Park" control before pressing in the "Drive" button and then stepped on the gas, under some circumstances the transmission would have to pass through reverse before it got into drive, with the result that the car, instead of going forward as anticipated, would shoot backwards, creating a dan-

gerous situation. The *Mercury* organization is to be complimented for taking prompt action, as it did, to eliminate the hazard described. (With the extensive testing facilities the manufacturers have, it would be reasonable to expect that the possibilities of the defect in design of the parking mechanism would be discovered before the car was put into production.)

#### Gasoline mileage under test conditions

At a constant speed of 50 miles per hour, the gasoline mileage was 14.6 miles per gallon (a good deal less than the 18.3 miles per gallon obtained on last year's model). With the new 3.22 to 1 ratio, acceleration will be faster but gasoline mileage will unfortunately be further reduced.

#### Speedometer errors

|                              |    |    |      |
|------------------------------|----|----|------|
| Indicated speed, m.p.h. .... | 30 | 50 | 60   |
| Actual speed, m.p.h. ....    | 30 | 49 | 58.5 |

#### Odometer

Approximately 6 percent fast.

#### Braking

No abnormal brake fading\* was experienced with this car.

#### Riding and handling qualities

This car exhibited very good riding and handling qualities, but these were not as good as on *Plymouth* and *Chrysler*. There was an almost complete absence of wheel hop. Cornering was good, but not as good as the lower-priced *Plymouth*. Although the test car was not equipped with power steering, it was very easy to steer. Power steering would be unnecessary for this car except possibly for easier parking by people who are lacking in strength or vigor, or must drive much on winding or mountain roads.

#### A— (Tentative)

##### Mercury Monterey

A well designed and finished car with very good riding and handling qualities. Gasoline mileage, which was about the same as the *Oldsmobile Super 88*, was not good and will be even poorer with the new higher-ratio rear axle gears. Lower gasoline mileage, which is quite common on this year's cars, is one of the prices consumers must pay for engines of excessive horsepower (even though manufacturers' publicity has tried to persuade car owners that the new engines give good gasoline economy and have not sacrificed efficiency to gain extra power).

\* Brake fade can be defined as the fading away or loss of the braking ability, caused by repeated high-speed stops or by continuous operation of the brakes as required in descending a long grade. Such braking generates heat so fast that it cannot be quickly dissipated, with today's lower cars and smaller wheels. This heat results in expansion of the brake drums, eventually to such an extent that the brake linings do not make the needed strong contact with the brake drums even when the brake pedal is fully depressed.



### The Mercury's specifications

|                        | Monterey | Montclair | Turnpike Cruiser |
|------------------------|----------|-----------|------------------|
| Taxable horsepower     | 46.2     | 46.2      | 51.2             |
| Taxable weight, pounds | 3890     | 3905      | 4015             |

#### Engine

|   |             |             |             |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Piston displacement, cubic inches           | 312         | 312         | 368         |
| Rated horsepower at rpm.                    | 255 at 4600 | 255 at 4600 | 290 at 4600 |
| Compression ratio                           | 9.7 to 1    | 9.7 to 1    | 9.7 to 1    |
| Oil filter                                  | Full flow   | Full flow   | Full flow   |
| Cooling system capacity with heater, quarts | 21          | 21          | 24          |

#### Chassis

|   |           |           |           |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Wheelbase, inches                             | 122       | 122       | 122       |
| Over-all length, inches                       | 211       | 211       | 211       |
| Width, inches                                 | 79        | 79        | 79        |
| Height (loaded), inches                       | 57        | 57        | 57        |
| Tires   | 8.00 x 14 | 8.00 x 14 | 8.00 x 14 |
| Brake factor                                  | 46        | 46        | 49        |
| Minimum road clearance, inches                | 5.9       | 5.9       | 5.9       |
| Turning diameter, feet                        | 43.3      | 43.3      | 43.3      |
| Steering wheel turns, full left to full right | 5         | 5         | 5         |

#### Other details

|                                   |                         |                         |                         |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Battery                           | 12-volt 55-amp.         | 12-volt 55-amp.         | 12-volt 55-amp.         |
| Gasoline tank, gallons            | 20                      | 20                      | 20                      |
| Windshield wipers                 | Vacuum,<br>with booster | Vacuum,<br>with booster | Vacuum,<br>with booster |
| Curb weight of car tested, pounds | 4020                    | —                       | —                       |

### Mercury prices

|                                    | V-8     | AUTOMATIC<br>TRANSMISSION | POWER<br>STEERING | POWER<br>BRAKES | RADIO | HEATER  | OIL<br>FILTER |
|------------------------------------|---------|---------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------|---------|---------------|
| Monterey                           | \$2605* | \$226                     | \$86              | \$38            | \$100 | \$91.50 | Included      |
| Montclair                          | 3148*   | Included                  | 86                | 38              | 100   | 91.50   | Included      |
| Turnpike Cruiser<br>4-door Hardtop | 3809*   | Included                  | Included          | Included        | 100   | 91.50   | Included      |

\* Does not include freight, dealer's preparation and conditioning charge, state and local taxes, which are variable.



*Oldsmobile Super 88*

## Oldsmobile Super 88

### General comments

It is difficult to figure out why Oldsmobile produces three cars (the 88, the *Super 88*, and the 98) which are so much alike except in price. The *Super 88* sells for about \$230 more than the 88, and the 98, \$330 more than the *Super 88*, with comparable equipment (see specifications table). These cars all have the same engine. The 98 has a 4-inch-longer wheelbase than the 88 and *Super 88*, but the leg room is approximately the same in all three. The 98 has slightly less headroom than the other two.

The first impression one gets when sitting in the *Oldsmobile Super 88* is that of being surrounded and encased in chrome; there is entirely too much chrome in evidence. The crash padding on the dash, though better than on the *Buick*, is useful only as a glare-reducing agent; it is much too thin to be effective in preventing or minimizing injury in a crash.

The controls are well placed, but for some drivers the horn ring will be in the way of reading the speedometer. The relatively undesirable warning lights are used instead of gauges for ammeter and oil pressure. The temperature indicator consists of two bull's eyes with the words "Hot" above and "Cold" below (not considered a desirable arrangement). The hood ornament was sharp, and in addition there was a sharp spear-pointed ornament over each front fender (see Figure 2).

The top of the dash is separated from the windshield frame by a slot running almost the entire length of the dash. This provides good defrosting action, but objects that may fall down the center of this slot will be hard to retrieve. Heater and ventilator controls are of the push-button type; the heater was satisfactory, but

its blower was noisy at the "high" position. The glove compartment was extremely wide, but only 3 inches deep in one part and 5 inches in the other.

The rear door handles could be accidentally opened by the knees, and there was danger of the heads of tall rear-seat passengers striking the top of the rear window frame when the car passed over a bad bump.

The bumpers were very massive in appearance, but free of objectionable projections found on a number of cars. Entrance and egress through the rear doors were very difficult (see Figure 3).

### Performance on road tests

In the acceleration tests from a standing start, it was found to be impossible to utilize fully the entire torque available at the rear wheels even on a dry road having a high coefficient of friction. On roads having a low coefficient of friction (ice- or snow-covered or wet roads) the amount of torque available would cause the wheels to slide and in some instances, as on a slippery road, the car might slide laterally. The great engine power of this car could be extremely dangerous in the hands of any but a very careful, conservative driver. Acceleration times were: from 0 to 30 m.p.h., 3.8 sec.; from 0 to 60, 10.6; 20 to 50, 6.4; from 40 to 60, 5.2; all were very fast, and among the top three or four 1957 cars.

The automatic transmission was very smooth in operation and detent actions in shifting were not noticeable.

### Gasoline mileage under test conditions

At a constant speed of 50 m.p.h., the gasoline mileage was 14.9 m.p.g., a considerable decrease from the 17.7 m.p.g. obtained in the test of last year's model.

*(Continued on page 20)*

### The Oldsmobile's specifications

|   | 88                      | Super 88                | 98                      |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Taxable horsepower                            | 51                      | 51                      | 51                      |
| Taxable weight, pounds                        | 4000                    | 4050                    | 4345                    |
| <b>Engine</b>                                 |                         |                         |                         |
| Cylinder arrangement                          | V-8<br>valve-in-head    | V-8<br>valve-in-head    | V-8<br>valve-in-head    |
| Piston displacement, cubic inches             | 370.7                   | 370.7                   | 370.7                   |
| Rated horsepower at rpm.                      | 277 at 4400             | 277 at 4400             | 277 at 4400             |
| Compression ratio                             | 9.5 to 1                | 9.5 to 1                | 9.5 to 1                |
| Oil filter                                    | Full flow               | Full flow               | Full flow               |
| Cooling system capacity with heater, quarts   | 21                      | 21                      | 21                      |
| <b>Chassis</b>                                |                         |                         |                         |
| Wheelbase, inches                             | 122                     | 122                     | 126                     |
| Over-all length, inches                       | 208                     | 208                     | 217                     |
| Width, inches                                 | 76                      | 76                      | 76                      |
| Height (loaded), inches                       | 58                      | 58                      | 58                      |
| Tires   | 8.50 x 14               | 8.50 x 14               | 8.50 x 14               |
| Brake factor                                  | 40                      | 40                      | 38                      |
| Minimum road clearance, inches                | 6                       | 6                       | 6                       |
| Turning diameter, feet                        | 42                      | 42                      | 43                      |
| Steering wheel turns, full left to full right | 4-3/4*                  | 4-3/4*                  | 4-3/4*                  |
| <b>Other details</b>                          |                         |                         |                         |
| Battery                                       | 12-volt 70-amp.         | 12-volt 70-amp.         | 12-volt 70-amp.         |
| Gasoline tank, gallons                        | 20                      | 20                      | 20                      |
| Windshield wipers                             | Vacuum,<br>with booster | Vacuum,<br>with booster | Vacuum,<br>with booster |
| Curb weight of car tested, pounds             | —                       | 4520†                   | —                       |

\* 4, with power steering.

† The 4-door hardtop.

### Oldsmobile prices

|                       | V-8     | AUTOMATIC<br>TRANSMISSION | POWER<br>STEERING | POWER<br>BRAKES | RADIO | HEATER |
|-----------------------|---------|---------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------|--------|
| 88 4-door Sedan       | \$2798* | \$231                     | \$108             | \$40            | \$103 | \$91   |
| Super 88 4-door Sedan | 3030*   | 231                       | 108               | 40              | 103   | 91     |
| 98 4-door Sedan       | 3741*   | Included                  | Included          | Included        | 103   | 91     |

\* Does not include freight, dealer's preparation and conditioning charge, state and local taxes, which are variable.



Figure 2—On the Oldsmobile, there was a sharp spear-pointed ornament over each front fender.



Figure 3—Entrance and egress through the rear doors of the Oldsmobile were very difficult.

#### Speedometer errors

|                         |    |    |    |
|-------------------------|----|----|----|
| Indicated speed, m.p.h. | 30 | 50 | 60 |
| Actual speed, m.p.h.    | 28 | 47 | 56 |

#### Odometer

Approximately 12 percent fast.

#### Braking

There was marked brake fading on one sample of this car. After seven stops from 70 m.p.h., little or no braking effect remained, and it required approximately 5 minutes' running at 40 m.p.h. and a 5-minute cooling period before the brakes started to recover their effectiveness. A second car of the same model tested showed no abnormal brake fading after 12 stops from 70 miles per hour. It is possible that the marked difference between the two cars may have been due to the use of a different make of brake lining in the one.

#### Riding and handling qualities

This car gave a solid, "big car," ride. Seats were very comfortable. There was some tire noise and scuffing noted on sharp turns. The car's recovery on bounces from potholes was very good. The anti-dive ("Counter-Dive") suspension functioned satisfactorily in preventing the front end from going sharply down upon fast application of the brakes.

#### B+ (Tentative)

#### Oldsmobile Super 88

This car with its 277 rated horsepower is much too powerful. It is extremely sensitive to driver handling and would be a dangerous car for anyone but an expert

to drive under adverse weather conditions. It would be an excellent car for cruising on long turnpikes, but CR feels it should not be considered by any but the most careful driver who needs to drive at high speeds for long distances under good road conditions where high-speed, high-acceleration driving is permissible. It might be wise to check the car to be purchased for "brake fade" by stopping repeatedly from the purchaser's regular driving speed on a road where this test can be safely applied.

## Buick Special

#### General comments

This year, as before, the same basic engine is used on all Buick models, but the *Special* uses a two-barrel carburetor, a 9.5 to 1 compression ratio, and has 50 less rated horsepower than the *Century*, *Super*, and *Roadmaster*, which have four-barrel carburetors and a 10 to 1 compression ratio.

The *Special* and the *Century* use the same body. The *Super* and *Roadmaster* use a different body, which is longer than that used on the *Special* and *Century*.

The hood ornament is small and, like the large and useless protrusions on the front bumper, should be eliminated. The instrument panel was well arranged, and the moving-bar-type speedometer could be easily read. One innovation this year is a warning device which can be set to any predetermined speed; when this is exceeded, a buzzer operates and continues to

(Continued on page 22)



### The Buick's specifications

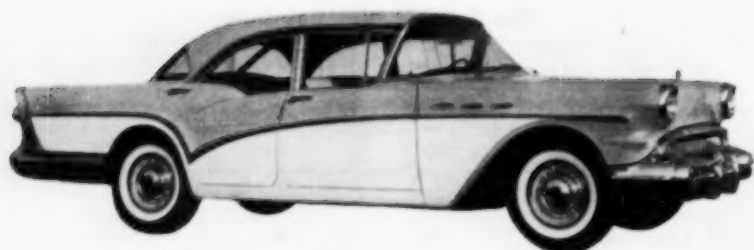
|  | Special         | Century         | Super           | Roadmaster      |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Taxable horsepower                                 | 54.45           | 54.45           | 54.45           | 54.45           |
| Taxable weight, pounds                             | 4000            | 4155            | 4355            | 4470            |
| <b>Engine</b>                                      |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| Piston displacement, cubic inches                  | 364             | 364             | 364             | 364             |
| Rated horsepower at rpm.                           | 250 at 4400     | 300 at 4600     | 300 at 4600     | 300 at 4600     |
| Compression ratio                                  | 9.5 to 1        | 10 to 1         | 10 to 1         | 10 to 1         |
| Oil filter   | Full flow       | Full flow       | Full flow       | Full flow       |
| Cooling system capacity with heater, quarts        | 18              | 18              | 18              | 18              |
| <b>Chassis</b>                                     |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| Wheelbase, inches                                  | 122             | 122             | 127.5           | 127.5           |
| Over-all length, inches                            | 208             | 208             | 215             | 215             |
| Width, inches                                      | 75              | 75              | 78              | 78              |
| Height (loaded), inches                            | 58.4            | 58.7            | 59.4            | 59.3            |
| Tires  | 7.10 x 15       | 7.60 x 15       | 7.60 x 15       | 8.00 x 15       |
| Brake factor                                       | 41              | 39              | 38              | 39              |
| Minimum road clearance, inches                     | 6.3             | 6.6             | 6.5             | 6.7             |
| Turning diameter, feet                             | 43.2            | 43.2            | 44.5            | 44.5            |
| Steering wheel turns, full left to full right      | 5*              | 5*              | 4†              | 4†              |
| <b>Other details</b>                               |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| Battery  | 12-volt 70-amp. | 12-volt 70-amp. | 12-volt 70-amp. | 12-volt 70-amp. |
| Gasoline tank, gallons                             | 20              | 20              | 20              | 20              |
| Windshield wipers                                  | Vacuum‡         | Vacuum‡         | Vacuum‡         | Vacuum‡         |
| Curb weight of car tested, pounds (2-door hardtop) | 4315            | —               | —               | —               |

\* 4. with power steering. † Power steering is standard equipment. ‡ With booster.

### Buick prices

|                           | V-8     | AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION | POWER STEERING | POWER BRAKES | RADIO     | HEATER | OIL FILTER |
|---------------------------|---------|------------------------|----------------|--------------|-----------|--------|------------|
| Special 4-door Sedan      | \$2645* | \$221                  | \$108          | \$39         | \$100-156 | \$91   | Included   |
| Century 4-door Hardtop    | 3339*   | Included               | 108            | 39           | 100-156   | 91     | Included   |
| Super 4-door Hardtop      | 3666*   | Included               | Included       | 39           | 100-156   | 91     | Included   |
| Roadmaster 4-door Hardtop | 4038*   | Included               | Included       | Included     | 100-156   | 91     | Included   |

\* Does not include freight, dealer's preparation and conditioning charge, state and local taxes, which are variable.



*Buick Special*

operate as long as car speed is above that for which it is set, unless the device is turned off. Controls for the windshield wipers and washer are now located at the side of the car instead of on the dash. The wipers do a poor job of cleaning at the corners (true of all wrap-around windshields though some are much worse than others in this respect). Distortion of the view through the windshield was only very slight. The curved windshield pillar makes it difficult to get in and out of the front of this car without knocking one's knees. Bad reflections from the instrument cluster and the steering wheel spokes are present and annoying even on a dull day. Buick has not followed the trend to 14-inch wheels. The larger wheels are to the user's advantage.

Front door handles are awkwardly positioned, and with the seat in a forward position, strike the top of the seat. The glove compartment is generous in size, but its slope permits articles to roll out when the door is opened. The padding on the dash is much too thin to be of value from a safety standpoint. The heater was very effective, but the heater blower was very noisy when operating at its highest speed. The defroster worked well but, due to the angle of the windshield, directs warm air into the passengers' eyes. Headroom in the rear was somewhat limited for a tall person. The heads of tall rear-seat passengers would be injured by striking the top of the rear window frame in passing over a bad bump. The bumper jack is of the scissors type and bracket plates are provided behind the front bumper to accommodate it. The jack was found to be fairly easy to use under most circumstances.

#### **Performance on road tests**

The *Buick Special* had somewhat faster acceleration than last year's model. The *Buick*, too, is greatly overpowered; its rated horsepower is twice that of the 1953 model. Acceleration times were: from 0 to 30 miles per hour, 4.4 seconds; from 0 to 60, 11.6; from 20 to 50, 7.1; from 40 to 60, 5.4.

#### **Gasoline mileage under test conditions**

At a constant speed of 50 miles per hour, the gasoline mileage was 15.9 miles per gallon (not as good as last year's model, which gave 17.2 miles per gallon).

#### **Speedometer errors**

|                         |    |    |    |
|-------------------------|----|----|----|
| Indicated speed, m.p.h. | 30 | 50 | 60 |
| Actual speed, m.p.h.    | 28 | 46 | 55 |

#### **Odometer**

Approximately 6 percent fast.

#### **Braking**

No abnormal brake fading was experienced with this car.

#### **Riding and handling qualities**

The riding quality, while good on smooth roads, was poor on even slightly rough roads. The rear coil springs and single-acting shock absorbers produced a ride that one observer likened to the tossing of a boat on the sea. Rear seat passengers are particularly likely to find the car uncomfortable. The car corners well, but with some tire squeal. When turns are made to the right, followed by a turn to the left or vice versa, the car rolls badly. After passing a bump in the road, the body continues to oscillate in a vertical plane long after the bump has been passed. On rough roads there was excessive vibration, some of which was transmitted to the steering wheel. Noise inside the car was at a low level except when the vent panes were open. The *Dynaflow* transmission operated satisfactorily, as did the power steering, which allowed a fair road feel at all times.

#### **B (Tentative)**

#### **Buick Special**

A generally well-constructed car, but, like *Oldsmobile*, overpowered. Definitely not a suitable car for the driver who is not conservative and careful in his handling of a car, especially on icy, snowy, wet, or gravelly roads, and best suited for those who do all or nearly all of their driving on smooth roads. The much publicized "million dollar ride" left much to be desired.

## Automobile safety belts



Picture of a crash test in which a car strikes the side of another.

Do automobile safety belts supply the degree of protection from death or serious injury the purchaser has been led to expect? On the basis of tests in which more than 40 cars were crashed under various conditions, plus field investigations of actual accidents, the answer unfortunately seems to be no. The cars that were crashed contained specially constructed dummies wearing various types of seat belts and shoulder harness and the crashes were photographed by ultra-high-speed motion picture cameras, so that the effects on the simulated persons in the cars could be observed in slow motion. Viewing these movies would leave no doubt in anyone's mind as to the inadequacy of safety belts and shoulder harnesses in major crashes as these devices are at present constructed.

Some of the advocates of seat belts rely chiefly on statistical data to reach their conclusions. Unfortunately, statistics can be greatly misleading; for example, those who have been busy defending the excessive and ever-increasing horsepower of the newer cars as a means to increase safety quote figures to show that the accident rate per passenger mile is lower than it has been in previous years when the cars' engines were much less powerful. This neglects to take into account the other factors that have contributed

greatly to reducing the accident rate per mile, such as improved highways, freeways, and parkways in which dangerous crossings and traffic lights have been eliminated, more one-way roads, separation zones or islands, etc., improved sealed beam headlights, and last but not least, the advances in medicine and surgery which have enabled doctors using new drugs and techniques to save more lives of accident victims. Surely the terrible accident record of the past Christmas tide (over 1100 killed) does not indicate increased safety or suggest that the ever-increasing speed and acceleration possibilities of today's cars are making for a reduction in the number of accidents—as some, including automobile manufacturers, have the hardihood to claim.

What are the type of injuries that most frequently cause death? One study of fatal accidents showed that a substantial percentage of the fatal injuries occurred to the head, and next in order were injuries to the neck and cervical spine. Other studies have claimed to show that many people are killed from being thrown from a car involved in a crash, and it was held that if this could be prevented the number of people killed or injured would be greatly reduced. Keep-



Forces acting laterally on a passenger wearing a seat belt can force the head into violent contact with hard structures in the car.

Restraint of the lower torso of a person wearing a seat belt cannot prevent his head from making violent and destructive contact with the dash.



ing these facts in mind and also CR's statement in the January issue that "The evidence so far collected indicates strongly that in some types of accidents, instead of preventing injuries, seat belts and some types of shoulder harness actually may increase their severity and may even be a contributing cause of death," let us consider how a safety belt functions in a crash.

Head injuries are usually incurred by the passenger sitting beside the driver in what is sometimes called the death seat. In a head-on crash into another car or into any other object, this passenger is thrown forward, and his head strikes the windshield or dash panel with terrific force. Slow-motion projection of high-speed pictures shows that seat belts functioning as intended, without any failure of the belt or its fastenings to the car, have often acted to increase their severity by permitting the upper part of the body to swing or jackknife in an arc around the belt as a pivot or fulcrum. In order for the safety belt to have an effective protective action against crash forces, there would need to be at least 40 inches of forward clearance free of any object or hard surface to prevent the head of the person wearing a belt from striking the windshield or dash. In present-day cars, the driver or rider will not have 40 inches of unobstructed forward clearance in which the body can bend forward from the hips without striking



*One of the crash tests.*

the dash or other hard object. The considerable force concentrated on the abdomen under the belt and its buckle is almost certain to rupture or tear the soft tissues underneath.

Most cars are equipped with safety belts for the driver and a front-seat passenger only. In a crash, the rear-seat passengers may be thrown forward, striking the front-seat passengers wearing seat belts, causing the front-seat passengers to receive the additional energy of the catapulted rear-passengers' weights and momentum resulting in increased severity of the head blow and increased abdominal pressure at the belt area.

Chest injuries are usually received by the driver by contact with the steering wheel, and if the steering wheel collapses far enough, he also receives head injuries. Neither of these injuries can be prevented by the present seat belts. A third cause of death, whiplash injuries, likewise cannot be prevented by seat belts. (Whiplash injuries, medically termed cervical neck strains, are those in which the head is sharply snapped backward, and the neck extended.)

It has been stated by some authorities that many deaths occur from the occupant's being thrown from the car and that seat belts prevent this occurrence, thereby reducing the chances of being killed. While it may happen that persons would be killed by being thrown from a car into the path of another oncoming vehicle or by their heads striking the pavement or some other object outside the car, the argument overlooks the fact that in some cases ejection from a car is the lesser of two hazards, and that many of the persons thrown from a car may have already been fatally injured, for reliable information concerning the condition or probability of survival of the occupant of the vehicle just prior to ejection is not available, and is not likely to be.

In several states, the state police officers whose duties require that they drive at high



*Impingement of the lower part of the trunk against the upper edge or the sharp fold of a seat belt strained against the abdomen can materially increase hazard of internal injury when a belt is used. The forward propulsion of rear seat passengers in a collision will often increase very greatly the forces acting on persons in the front seats.*





*The upper diagrams show the action of the body without a seat belt; the lower diagrams show the nature of the actual impacts that occurred when a seat belt was used. In a crash without a seat belt, the passenger might have hit the same or another part of the car with another part of his body less vulnerable to injury than his head, or the forces sustained might have been distributed over a greater body area and so caused less injury and less destruction of surface and deeper tissues. The seat belt, which, in this type of crash, would tend to concentrate the impacts and injuries to the head (and to the abdomen in some cases), could in some instances be itself a cause of death or serious injury.*



speeds and must take certain risks of accident to which the general driving public is not exposed, are not required to use safety belts, and are not using them.

It was to be expected that injuries would be caused by the pressure of the seat belt on the body due to the sharp deceleration which is applied to the body by pressure on the abdominal region at the time of a crash. One case recently reported by Dr. Jacob Kulowski in St. Joseph, Missouri, involved a 210-pound 34-year-old state trooper who was wearing a safety belt at the time of collision of his car with a truck. The damage to the car was relatively slight. The driver of the truck was unhurt. The trooper escaped all external injury and went about his business for a time, after which he had severe abdominal pains requiring his removal to a hospital. Discharged in eight days, he was forced again to return to the hospital. At that time an operation was required for an adhesion which was believed due to the effects of the great pressure of the safety belt. It was believed that the primary injury could have been caused by contusion from the belt or belt buckle causing

localized hemorrhages and subsequent inflammatory reaction.

Without belts, the number of pelvic injuries are relatively small. (However, when they occur, a high percentage are dangerous or fatal.) For this reason, many physicians have questioned the use of safety belts in the belief that they might bring about an increase of injuries to the abdomen and lumbar spine. One investigator of air crash victims believed that safety belts "may become a deadly hazard." He reported eight cases of rupture of the aorta (the great trunk artery leading from the heart) believed to be due to marked flexion of the trunk.

Seat belts also have the disadvantage of preventing speedy escape from a car in the event it plunges into a stream or lake or catches on fire. Such occurrences, of course, are not rare, and hand or arm injuries and other causes may often prevent the victim from unbuckling the belt in time to save his life.

The foregoing clearly indicates that seat belts have serious limitations. In addition, imperfections in belt design and improper installation of present-day belt assemblies prevent some of

Data, photos, drawings, and outline material herein were derived from the technical discussion, *Some Aspects of the Automobile Seat Belt Problem*, by Andrew J. White, director of Motor Vehicle Research, Inc., South Lee, N.H., presented at a meeting of judges, lawyers, police and other public officials and safety experts at Yale University Law School, November 20, 1956. Publication of the complete work by Motor Vehicle Research, Inc., is expected for about July 1957.

Valuable information was also obtained from the report just published of the hearings on Traffic Safety before a subcommittee of the House of Representatives Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce. Interested readers in a position to obtain and study that 927-page document are advised to do so.

them from giving the limited protection a seat belt might afford.

There is reason for concern that many users of seat belts are living in the belief that their belts are highly effective safeguards, and that they will on that account take chances on the road they would not consider taking without the belts. Some type of restraining harness consisting basically of straps which hold the body firmly in the seat, controlling both the upper shoulder and lower pelvis portions of the body, could possibly afford some help in certain common types of crash accidents, provided that this harness could be so constructed as to permit its user to escape from it with no more than a second's delay in case a crash occurs. Although there are several makes of shoulder harness on the market, their effectiveness in accidents is not known, and little publicity has been given to them. So far as Consumers' Research knows, automobile manufacturers are not encouraging car buyers to purchase and use this type of safety appliance. Possibly failure to feature shoulder harness may be due in part to the fact that, in tests and experiments so far made, these harnesses have not proven to be a satisfactory solution of the problem. Even when the harness is firmly anchored to secure floor or frame areas behind the back of the front seat, when the back of the front seat fails, as it usually does in any sort of serious crash, the harness becomes ineffective in preventing violent forward motion of the body.

Automobiles are being built to give ever-increasing power, scope and speed of operation, but human faculties of perception, action, reaction, and decision, which are affected by fatigue

and mental stress, are not subject to corresponding improvement, and are thus not sufficiently good to permit safe operation of today's cars at the speeds we have become accustomed to and accept as normal.

It is CR's considered opinion that the only conclusion that can safely be drawn from the data that are presently available is that in certain types of accidents properly constructed seat belts have some value, while in other types of accidents such belts have no useful effect or may even increase the danger to the driver or passenger. As the user of the belt can have no knowledge of the type of accident in which he is likely to be involved, he is not in a good position to decide whether he should or should not use a safety belt. The automobile industry has a very direct responsibility which has been poorly fulfilled to those who purchase automobiles. Car manufacturers have given little consideration to modifications of basic automobile design that would lessen the degree of injury received in a crash or collision. Promoting the use of safety belts of limited value is at best a poor attempt at a solution to this problem. (See the articles on safety aspects of today's automobiles in CONSUMERS' RESEARCH BULLETIN for October 1956, November 1956, December 1956, and January 1957.)

The best advice that can be given to prevent



Photograph of a nylon belt (one of the two seat belts which failed in the crash tests mentioned). Six safety belts did not fail mechanically in these tests.

fatal accidents is: (1) Drive carefully at moderate speeds. (2) Do not take unnecessary chances by passing on hills or in the face of oncoming traffic because you have the latest model car with high horsepower and terrific acceleration. Head-on collisions often leave the car a tangled mess of wreckage and its occupants dead or terribly maimed. No safety device can ever

afford safety against grave injury or death in such crashes. (3) Drive with a defensive action in *anticipation* of the accident that may occur through the fault, carelessness, or unavoidable difficulty to someone else on the road through drunkenness, foolhardiness, inattentiveness, sudden illness, a heart attack, or even a momentary lapse into unconsciousness.

## Corrections and emendations to Consumers' Research Annual and monthly Bulletins

Motion picture  
cameras and  
equipment  
Page 207, Col. 2  
Annual '56-'57

Delete 10-line paragraph beginning "Film in magazines often jams" and ending with "had pictures ruined." Present information indicates that damage to film by jamming in defective 8 and 16 mm. magazines has largely been corrected, and it is believed that any jamming that now occurs is likely to be due to a defect in the camera rather than to a fault of the film magazine.

Report on dictation  
equipment  
Page 10  
Dec. '56 Bulletin

Change rating of *Comptometer Commander Combination Model D20A* from *C. Not Recommended* to *B. Intermediate*. Information received by Consumers' Research indicates that the leakage current in the specimen tested was higher than is typical of the regular production of the *Comptometer D20A*. Leakage current on the *D20A* should now be about 0.5 ma., which is satisfactory, but not sufficiently low to warrant an *A-Recommended* rating.

The manufacturer has redesigned the power supply on the newest series of machines, the *D20AG*, in an effort to eliminate any possible shock hazard. Leakage current on several samples of the new model was found to be so low as to be negligible (0.05 ma.). An audible signal has been added to this machine, as CR had suggested, to eliminate the possibility of the user's dictating with the recording head in the wrong position, which would result in a blank record. Aside from these two changes, the *D20AG* is the same as the *D20A*; there has been no change in price. The latest model, *D20AG*, is *A. Recommended*.

Automatic wash-  
ing machines  
Pages 10, 11  
Jan. '57 Bulletin

The last two lines in the listing of the *Frigidaire Model WDU-57* automatic washer should be deleted. This washer was equipped with a shut-off for unbalanced loads, and opening the lid during opera-

tion stopped all action. (In the test, the shut-off did not operate because of a mistake by a service representative in reassembling the machine after replacing an electrically faulty switch.)

In the listing of the *Kelvinator WAG6* the statement "Lacks shut-off for unbalanced load" should be deleted. The cut-off device did not operate properly during the test, but it was found to work satisfactorily after a minor adjustment was made.

The rating of the *Philco W-266* should be changed from *B. Intermediate* to *A. Recommended*. The statements in the *Philco* listing "Rinses relatively poorly. Lacks shut-off for unbalanced load," should be deleted. Although the *Philco W-266* lacks a shut-off for unbalanced loads, as stated in the listing, a shut-off device is not required since the design of the machine is such that it spins with an unbalanced load without undue vibration. CR considers such an arrangement even more desirable than a shut-off device with its need for manual resetting.

In additional tests for effectiveness in rinsing, after the pressure switch controlling the water level had been adjusted, the *Philco* rinsed about the same as other washers. (The adjustment increased the total amount of water used by about three gallons.)

One manufacturer has suggested that some readers might possibly misinterpret the meaning of the words "desirable" and "undesirable" as they appear in parentheses in descriptive comments in the ratings of various makes of automatic washers. In each case the parenthetical word is intended to apply only to a particular characteristic discussed in the given sentence (e.g., long spinning of tub after shut-off of power). The parenthetical word does not, of course, apply to the judgment of the machine as a whole; CR's opinion as to over-all effectiveness and performance is expressed by the *A, B, or C* rating given the appliance.

## Problems of the home painter

### Discontinued lots of paints

There is always a risk in buying a cut-price or discontinued paint. The dealer may be shifting from a less satisfactory paint to one which he thinks will be more satisfactory, and getting rid of the stock which he has not been able to sell.

A store that often has paint bargains may probably be suspected of having some regular source for them, which is likely to mean that the paint is not of top quality, or not as represented. Paint offered as old stock may not have been properly stored, and dealers with a good turn-over do not have much old stock, except perhaps in a few colors which have not sold well.

If the original label is on the can, something about the age of the paint can be judged by the condition of the label.

Never buy paint if the cans show signs of having bulged from pressure inside or if the can shows evidence of having been opened and re-closed.

Some old-stock paints may prove to be very slow-drying, and should in any case be tried for drying properties on a suitable test surface before making any extensive use of them.

Some types of enamel may thicken so much with time that they become jellies, and so would be unusable. If the product stirs readily to a smooth condition of correct consistency, free from lumps, has no skin or only a thin skin, and dries properly, it has not been impaired by too long storage.

The consumer should especially avoid offers by mail for lots of allegedly high-quality outside white paint supposed to be left-over material offered at a very special reduced price. At least one company using this method of selling has been working a racket, and the paint contained reprocessed paint residues and high water content entirely different from the sample that had been supplied to an intending purchaser. (See the article on page 17 of CONSUMERS' RESEARCH BULLETIN for August 1956.)

### Painting concrete

Concrete, stucco, brickwork, and masonry are best painted with paints that are readily permeable to water vapor. Oil paints and enamels are low in permeability and are more inclined to blister and peel under some conditions than are highly permeable paints. Where oil paint has

This article is one of several which have appeared recently in CR Bulletins on the subject of paints and painting. Others in the past few months that will be of interest to those who have painting problems: "Marine varnish," February 1957; "Repainting," January 1957; "Notes for the consumer on painting the house," October 1956; "Deceptive practices in the sale of paint," August 1956; "For a cooler home, a roof of light color," April 1956.

been used successfully in the past, repainting with similar oil paint is advisable, but otherwise one of the more permeable paints is recommended.

Good results are claimed for latex (emulsified resin) paints such as polyvinyl acetate paints and acrylic-resin paints made for exterior use. They are easier to apply than cement-bound water paints. The cement-bound water paints, however, have a much longer record of successful experience. The cement-water paints are available from paint and hardware dealers; or Portland cement mixed when dry with fine sand, then with water, can be used. (Oil paint is not effective where water can reach the paint coating from behind, that is, through a porous wall material.)

The paint as applied to concrete or brick or porous stone masonry should be the consistency of rich cream; this requires from  $5\frac{1}{2}$  to  $9\frac{1}{2}$  pints of water per 10 pounds of dry powder consisting entirely of cement; or from 4 to 6 pints of water for each 10 pounds of dry powder consisting of a mixture of cement and sand. Weigh out the required 20 percent by weight of dry hydrated lime. Add to it, with stirring, just enough water to make a soft, pasty mass, distinctly thicker than a heavy cream; then add this pasty mass to the cement or to the cement and sand mix. Ready-made paints for concrete may contain white pigments, such as titanium dioxide or zinc sulfide, usually with extending pigments, also. If the paint is tinted, the pigments for this purpose must be of the type known as limeproof.

The wall must be dampened thoroughly before application of the paint (but not left wet); it must be kept damp for at least 24 hours after painting. If the surface is too wet, the paint will streak and flow, while a wall that is too dry when



painting is begun is hard to paint and absorbs too much water from the paint.

A low-cost white paint that produces a water-resistant and long-lasting coating can be mixed on the job, according to a formula given by one of the large cement manufacturers. The ingredients are white cement, masons' hydrated lime, and water pure enough to be fit for drinking. An amount of paint suitable for convenient use by a single painter is made by measuring into a clean bucket, one quart of cement, one quart of lime, and about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  quarts of water; this should be stirred well, using only enough

water to produce a thick creamy mixture. This amount of paint is readily kept uniform by stirring as painting proceeds, so that settling does not take place. A fast, experienced painter accustomed to using this type of paint could handle double the quantity recommended. [The preceding paragraph is from an article on painting small concrete block buildings in CONSUMERS' RESEARCH BULLETIN, July 1948.]

Commercial cement-water paints may give better results than those mixed at home, because the constituents may be more finely ground and more intimately mixed.

## Two "dog-bone" wrenches for the home workshop

THE LOW COST of the "dog-bone" type multi-socket wrench and its versatility would make it a good addition to any toolbox or toolboard. The average home craftsman and handyman would be likely to find many uses for this convenient, compact tool.

Two of the better known brands were tested by CR for general usefulness, sturdiness, and number and size of bolt heads and nuts on which the wrench can be used. The only great difference between the two tested was in their prices; the price of the *Inca "Quickie"* is three times that of the *Reese "Multi-Wrench."*

About the only disadvantage of these wrenches was the size of the balls in which the sockets were cast. The size of this part of the wrench necessarily limits the use of the wrench for small nuts or cap-screw heads in a confined area. While this is a disadvantage, it is not always a serious one, and the other uses to which the tool can be put and its convenience tend to offset this limitation.

### A. Recommended

**Reese "Multi-Wrench"** (Reese Padlock Co., Lancaster, Pa.) 29c.

The "Multi-Wrench" has 10 socket openings of different sizes. The maximum opening is for the head of a  $\frac{3}{8}$ -in. bolt and the nut of a  $\frac{3}{8}$ -in. bolt. The minimum size accepted by the wrench is the head of a No. 10 bolt and the nut of a No. 6 bolt. It withstood vigorous hammer blows when used on a tightened bolt, without significant



damage to the sockets and without breaking of the tool. The wrench is a casting of a white metal alloy, which is well polished, and about 4 in. long. 1

**Inca "Quickie"** (J. E. Schwartz Co., 111-51 Lifferts Blvd., South Ozone Park 20, L.I., N.Y.; made in Switzerland) 98c.

The "Quickie" has 10 socket openings (one is for square-head nuts). The maximum opening is for the head of a  $\frac{3}{8}$ -in. bolt and the nut of a  $\frac{5}{16}$ -in. bolt. The minimum size accepted by the wrench is the head of a No. 6 bolt and the nut of a No. 4 bolt. It withstood vigorous hammer blows when used on a tightened bolt, without significant damage to the sockets and without breaking the wrench. The tool is a casting of a white metal alloy, which is well finished, and about 4 in. long. 3



## Off the editor's chest

(Continued from page 2)

of fertilizer to use on your particular soil, but how much, and how best to apply it. It will save your pocketbook from unwarranted assaults if you keep in mind that there is no wonder-working fertilizer that brings unparalleled growth and bloom and is good for everything under all conditions. The equivalent of the patent medicine nostrum that in earlier days claimed to cure all human ills—and be good for horses, too—frequently makes its appearance in the horticultural field even in these enlightened days.

One technique reported in New Jersey last spring was for a truck loaded with dark rich-looking material to pull up in front of a house. A fast-talking salesman extolled the merits of his "fertilizer" and quoted a moderate-sounding price of so many cents a bushel. If the homeowner was impressed and bought the deal, his lawn was rapidly covered with the material. But when the unlucky purchaser was presented with a bill he would discover that the job often took the whole sum he was planning to spend on his garden for the next two years. Samples analyzed by the Agricultural Experiment Station at Rutgers at the request of indignant consumers indicated that the stuff did not meet state requirements for commercial fertilizer.

In another section of the country, the St. Louis Better Business Bureau has rendered outstanding service in exposing deceptive claims for horticultural products of many kinds. This past year it has reported being swamped with complaints about nursery stock that failed to come up to expectations or sales claims. Furthermore, when consumers placed an order based on professional-looking sketches or plans only to discover that the shrubs did not produce the effect promised, they have run into serious difficulties. In a number of cases, the purchasers found that they had obligated themselves to two orders, one for fall and one for spring planting, with a provision that a 40 percent penalty, running as high as \$30 or \$40, was to be invoked if they canceled the second order. Not only was the size of the shrubs misrepresented, but in some cases the stock was dead on arrival. Payment was always required in advance, and replacements were sometimes difficult to secure or were promised only for the next growing season.

In an informative little leaflet, the St. Louis Better Business Bureau points out that too few people realize that nursery stock can be graded in accordance with the American Standard of Nursery Stock as sponsored by the American



Courtesy St. Louis Better Business Bureau

*The shrub on the left is size 14", the smallest considered desirable for resale to the consumer, and was priced at \$2.49 by a local nursery. The shrub on the right was purchased from a house-to-house canvasser. It was priced at \$3.80 and is known as size 8" or "liner" stock, bought by professional nurseries for further development before sale to the public.*

Association of Nurserymen, Inc. Roses, for example, are graded by number: No. 1, No. 1½, No. 2, culls, and rejects. Most reputable growers burn their culls and rejects, but some sell them for a few cents each to merchandisers of "bargain-priced" roses. Trees are graded according to height in relation to caliper, and the size of the ball or root system should be in proportion. Evergreens are graded according to the ratio of height to spread, and the ball or root system must meet a minimum diameter.

The St. Louis Bureau advises that any responsible nurseryman or firm will be glad to grade items according to the American Standard of Nursery Stock and put the grade on the invoice. Be sure to get any guarantee of life or replacement *in writing* and the exact terms, i.e., whether replacement will be made without charge, at what charge, whether the nurseryman will pay postage on returned items or not, and the time limit on the guarantee. There are, of course, a number of reputable firms that sell by mail, but if there is any doubt about a firm's standing, check with your local Better Business Bureau, or the National Better Business Bureau, Chrysler Bldg., New York City. Don't patronize an itinerant salesman offering seeds, shrubs, trees, bulbs, fertilizer, and the like and don't buy anything of the sort sight unseen.

# Ratings of Motion Pictures

THIS section aims to give critical consumers a digest of opinion from a wide range of motion picture reviews, including the motion picture trade press, leading newspapers and magazines—some 19 different periodicals in all. The motion picture ratings which follow thus do not represent the judgment of a single person, but are based on an analysis of critics' reviews.

The sources of the reviews are:

*Boxoffice, Cue, Daily News (N. Y.), The Exhibitor, Films in Review, Harrison's Reports, Joint Estimates of Current Motion Pictures, Motion Picture Herald, National Legion of Decency, Newsweek, New York Herald Tribune, New York Times, The New Yorker, Parents' Magazine, Release of the D. A. R. Preview Committee, Reviews and Ratings by the Protestant Motion Picture Council, The Tablet, Time, Variety (weekly).*

The figures preceding the title of the picture indicate the number of critics whose judgments of its entertainment values warrant a rating of A (recommended), B (intermediate), or C (not recommended).

Audience suitability is indicated by "A" for adults, "Y" for young people (14-18), and "C" for children, at the end of each line.

Descriptive abbreviations are as follows:

adv—adventure  
biog—biography  
c—in color (Ansco, Eastman, Technicolor, Trucolor, Warner Color, etc.)  
car—cartoon  
com—comedy  
cri—crime and capture of criminals  
doc—documentary  
dr—drama  
fan—fantasy  
hist—founded on historical incident

mel—melodrama  
mus—musical  
mys—mystery  
nov—dramatization of a novel  
rom—romance  
sci—science fiction  
soc—social problem drama  
trav—travelogue  
war—dealing with the lives of people in wartime  
wes—western

| A  | B  | C  |   |
|----|----|----|---|
| —  | 3  | 1  | Above Us the Waves (British) . . . . . war-dr AYC         |
| —  | 4  | 2  | Albert Schweitzer . . . . . biog-c AYC                    |
| —  | 5  | 4  | Amazon Trader, The . . . . . doc-dr A                     |
| 5  | 5  | 4  | Anastasia . . . . . dr-c AYC                              |
| —  | —  | 3  | Angels of Darkness (Italian) . . . . . dr A               |
| 11 | 5  | —  | Around the World in 80 Days . . . . . adv-c AYC           |
| —  | 4  | 3  | As Long As You're Near Me (German) . . . . . dr A         |
| —  | 11 | 5  | Attack . . . . . war-dr A                                 |
| —  | 9  | 8  | Baby Doll . . . . . dr A                                  |
| —  | 10 | 6  | Back from Eternity . . . . . mel A                        |
| 1  | 7  | 10 | Bad Seed, The . . . . . dr A                              |
| —  | 7  | 5  | Bandido . . . . . mel-c A                                 |
| —  | 6  | 3  | Barretts of Wimpole Street, The . . . . . dr-c A          |
| —  | 5  | —  | Battle Hymn . . . . . biog-c AYC                          |
| —  | 5  | 3  | Beast of Hollow Mountain . . . . . sci-c AYC              |
| 1  | 14 | 3  | Best Things in Life Are Free, The . . . . . mus-com-c AYC |
| —  | 11 | 3  | Between Heaven and Hell . . . . . war-dr A                |
| —  | 5  | 9  | Beyond a Reasonable Doubt . . . . . mys-mel A             |
| —  | 3  | 2  | Big Boodle, The . . . . . cri-mel A                       |
| —  | —  | 3  | Bitter Spears . . . . . doc-dr-c A                        |
| —  | 1  | 6  | Black Whip, The . . . . . wes A                           |
| —  | 2  | 5  | Blonde Sinner, The (British) . . . . . dr A               |
| —  | 4  | 6  | Boas, The . . . . . cri-mel A                             |
| 1  | 3  | 2  | Brass Legend, The . . . . . wes A                         |
| 1  | 10 | 1  | Brave One, The . . . . . dr-c AYC                         |
| 1  | 9  | 4  | Bundle of Joy . . . . . mus-com-c A                       |
| —  | 10 | 6  | Burning Hills, The . . . . . wes-c A                      |
| 7  | 8  | 4  | Bus Stop . . . . . dr-c A                                 |
| —  | 5  | —  | Calling Homicide . . . . . cri-mel A                      |
| —  | 4  | 3  | Canyon River . . . . . wes-c AYC                          |

| A  | B | C  |   |
|----|---|----|---|
| —  | 4 | 6  | Cha-Cha-Cha-Boom . . . . . mus-com A                    |
| —  | 2 | 1  | Crashing Las Vegas . . . . . com A                      |
| —  | 1 | 5  | Crime of Passion . . . . . mel A                        |
| —  | 4 | 4  | Cruel Tower, The . . . . . mel A                        |
| —  | 2 | 8  | Cry in the Night, A . . . . . mel A                     |
| —  | 3 | 8  | Curucu, Beast of the Amazon . . . . . mel-c A           |
| —  | 6 | 2  | Dakota Incident . . . . . wes-c A                       |
| —  | 3 | 7  | Dance With Me Henry . . . . . com AYC                   |
| —  | 1 | 2  | Daniel Boone, Trail Blazer . . . . . wes AYC            |
| —  | 5 | 3  | Davy Crockett and the River Pirates . . . . . mel-c AYC |
| —  | 1 | 4  | Deadliest Sin, The (British) . . . . . cri-mel A        |
| —  | 8 | 5  | Death of a Scoundrel . . . . . mel A                    |
| —  | 3 | 6  | Desperadoes Are in Town, The . . . . . mel A            |
| —  | 5 | 7  | Doctors, The (French) . . . . . dr A                    |
| —  | 4 | 1  | Don't Knock the Rock . . . . . mus-com AYC              |
| —  | 4 | 2  | Drango . . . . . mel A                                  |
| —  | 6 | 3  | Edge of the City . . . . . mel A                        |
| —  | 7 | 3  | Everything But the Truth . . . . . com-c AYC            |
| —  | 2 | 2  | Fear (German) . . . . . dr A                            |
| —  | 1 | 2  | Fighting Trouble . . . . . com A                        |
| —  | 7 | 1  | Finger of Guilt (British) . . . . . mys-mel A           |
| —  | 4 | 5  | First Traveling Saleslady, The . . . . . mus-com-c AYC  |
| —  | 5 | 4  | Five Steps to Danger . . . . . mys-mel AYC              |
| —  | 2 | 12 | Flight to Hong Kong . . . . . cri-mel A                 |
| —  | 3 | —  | Forbidden Cargo (British) . . . . . mel AYC             |
| —  | 1 | 4  | Four Boys and a Gun . . . . . soc-dr A                  |
| —  | 7 | 5  | Four Girls in Town . . . . . com-c A                    |
| 6  | 9 | 3  | Friendly Persuasion . . . . . dr-c AYC                  |
| 1  | 5 | 1  | Full of Life . . . . . com A                            |
| —  | 2 | 6  | Gamma People, The (British) . . . . . sci-mel A         |
| 10 | 5 | 3  | Giant . . . . . dr-c AYC                                |
| 1  | 4 | 4  | Girl Can't Help It, The . . . . . mus-mel-c A           |
| —  | 8 | 9  | Girl He Left Behind, The . . . . . war-com A            |
| —  | — | 5  | Girls in Prison . . . . . soc-mel A                     |
| —  | 1 | 2  | Glass Tomb, The (British) . . . . . dr A                |
| —  | 7 | 6  | Grand Maneuver, The (French) . . . . . dr-c A           |
| —  | 5 | 4  | Great American Pastime, The . . . . . com AYC           |
| —  | 3 | 8  | Great Man, The . . . . . dr A                           |
| —  | 3 | 6  | Gun Brothers . . . . . wes A                            |
| —  | 5 | —  | Gun for a Coward . . . . . wes-c AYC                    |
| —  | 1 | 3  | Gun Slinger, The . . . . . wes-c A                      |
| —  | 2 | 3  | Gun the Man Down . . . . . wes A                        |
| —  | 3 | 2  | Halliday Brand, The . . . . . wes A                     |
| —  | 4 | —  | Happy Road, The . . . . . com AYC                       |
| —  | 4 | 5  | Hold Back the Night . . . . . war-dr A                  |
| —  | 4 | 8  | Hollywood or Bust . . . . . mus-com-c A                 |
| —  | 4 | 8  | Hot Cars . . . . . cri-mel A                            |
| —  | 1 | 4  | Hot Rod Girl . . . . . mel A                            |
| —  | 6 | 4  | Huk . . . . . mel-c AYC                                 |
| —  | 2 | 6  | Iron Petticoat, The . . . . . com-c A                   |
| —  | 7 | 3  | Istanbul . . . . . mys-mel-c A                          |
| —  | 1 | 2  | It Conquered the World . . . . . sci AYC                |
| —  | 1 | 2  | Jail Busters . . . . . cri-mel A                        |
| —  | 4 | —  | John and Julie (British) . . . . . dr-c A               |
| 1  | 8 | 8  | Julie . . . . . cri-mel A                               |
| —  | 5 | 1  | Kelly and Me . . . . . mus-com-c AYC                    |
| —  | 2 | 9  | King and Four Queens, The . . . . . wes-c A             |
| —  | 3 | —  | King of the Coral Sea (Australian) . . . . . mel AYC    |
| —  | 7 | 2  | La Sorcière (French) . . . . . fan A                    |
| —  | 3 | 5  | Last Man to Hang, The (British) . . . . . cri-mel A     |
| —  | 1 | 2  | Last of the Desperados . . . . . wes AYC                |
| 3  | 9 | 4  | Last Wagon, The . . . . . wes-c AYC                     |
| 3  | 6 | 6  | Lisbon . . . . . mel-c A                                |

| A | B  | C  |  |             |
|---|----|----|--|-------------|
| — | 5  | 13 | Love Me Tender                         | wes A       |
| 5 | 10 | 2  | Lust for Life                          | biog-c A    |
| — | 1  | 3  | Magnificent Roughnecks, The            | mel AYC     |
| 2 | 8  | 4  | Magnificent Seven, The (Japanese)      | dr-c A      |
| — | 8  | 4  | Man from Del Rio                       | wes A       |
| — | 1  | 6  | Man in the Vault                       | mys-mel A   |
| — | 1  | 3  | Man is Armed, The                      | cri-mel A   |
| — | 1  | 2  | Man of Africa (British)                | doc-dr-c A  |
| 1 | 9  | —  | Marcelino (Spanish)                    | dr AYC      |
| — | 3  | 1  | Men of Sherwood Forest (British)       | mel-c AYC   |
| — | 3  | 6  | Miami Exposé                           | cri-mel A   |
| — | 4  | —  | Mister Cory                            | mel-c A     |
| — | 2  | 8  | Mole People, The                       | sci AYC     |
| 3 | 9  | 5  | Mountain, The                          | dr-c AY     |
| 1 | 3  | 3  | Naked Hills, The                       | mel-c AYC   |
| — | 1  | 3  | Night Runner, The                      | cri-dr A    |
| — | 8  | 4  | Nightfall                              | mys-mel A   |
| — | 5  | —  | No Place to Hide                       | dr-c A      |
| — | 7  | 3  | Odongo (British)                       | dr-c A      |
| 1 | 6  | 1  | Oedipus Rex                            | dr-c A      |
| — | 10 | 9  | Opposite Sex, The                      | mus-com-c A |
| — | 3  | 4  | Pantaloons (French)                    | com-c A     |
| — | 7  | 3  | Papa, Mamma, The Maid and I (French)   | com A       |
| — | 1  | 3  | Passport to Treason                    | mys-mel A   |
| — | 3  | 4  | Peacemaker, The                        | wes AYC     |
| — | —  | 3  | Pharaoh's Curse                        | mys-mel A   |
| — | 12 | —  | Pillars of the Sky                     | mel-c A     |
| — | 6  | 6  | Port Afrique (British)                 | mel-c A     |
| 1 | 10 | 5  | Power and the Prize, The               | dr A        |
| — | 2  | 1  | Public Pigeon No. 1                    | com-c AYC   |
| — | 4  | 6  | Queen of Babylon, The (Italian)        | adv-c A     |
| — | 1  | 2  | Race for Life, A (British)             | mel A       |
| — | 4  | 1  | Rack, The                              | war-dr A    |
| 4 | 7  | 4  | Rainmaker, The                         | dr-c A      |
| — | 2  | 10 | Raw Edge                               | wes-c A     |
| — | 8  | 4  | Reprisal                               | wes-c A     |
| — | —  | 4  | Ride the High Iron                     | dr A        |
| — | 4  | 6  | Rock, Pretty Baby                      | mus-com A   |
| — | 3  | 3  | Rock, Rock, Rock                       | mus-com AYC |
| — | 3  | 6  | Rumble on the Docks                    | cri-mel A   |
| 1 | 8  | 2  | Run for the Sun                        | mel-c A     |
| — | 1  | 4  | Runaway Daughters                      | dr A        |
| — | 4  | 4  | Running Target                         | mel-c A     |
| — | 1  | 3  | Scandal, Inc.                          | cri-mel A   |
| — | 3  | 6  | Search for Bridey Murphy, The          | dr A        |
| 3 | 12 | 2  | Secrets of Life                        | doc-c AY    |
| 4 | 5  | 2  | Seven Wonders of the World             | trav-c AYC  |
| — | 4  | 6  | 7th Cavalry, The                       | wes-mel AY  |
| — | 1  | 3  | Shake, Rattle and Rock                 | mus-dr AY   |
| — | 7  | 5  | Sharkfighters, The                     | war-mel-c A |
| — | —  | 3  | She-Creature, The                      | sci-mel A   |
| — | 10 | 3  | Ship that Died of Shame, The (British) | mel AYC     |
| — | 5  | 8  | Showdown at Abilene                    | wes-c A     |
| 9 | 7  | 1  | Silent World, The                      | doc-c AYC   |
| — | 2  | 1  | Silken Affair, The (British)           | com A       |
| — | 4  | 5  | Slander                                | cri-mel A   |
| — | 3  | 7  | Snow was Black, The (French)           | soc-mel A   |
| 5 | 11 | 1  | Solid Gold Cadillac, The               | com-c AY    |
| — | 4  | 6  | Spin a Dark Web (British)              | cri-mel A   |
| — | 4  | 5  | Stagecoach to Fury                     | wes A       |
| — | 3  | —  | Strange Adventure                      | cri-mel A   |
| — | 3  | 2  | Strange Intruder                       | war-dr A    |
| — | 6  | 2  | Suicide Mission (British)              | war-mel AYC |
| — | 1  | 2  | Swamp Women                            | cri-mel-c A |
| 4 | 10 | 3  | Tea and Sympathy                       | dr-c A      |
| 6 | 7  | 5  | Tea House of the August Moon           | com-c AYC   |
| — | 14 | 4  | Teenage Rebel                          | soc-dr A    |
| — | —  | 4  | Tel Aviv Taxi (Israeli)                | com A       |
| 9 | 6  | 2  | Ten Commandments, The                  | dr-c AYC    |
| — | 7  | 3  | Tension at Table Rock                  | wes-c A     |
| — | 7  | 6  | These Wilder Years                     | dr A        |

| A | B  | C  |                               |                 |
|---|----|----|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | 2  | 2  | Three Brave Men               | propaganda-dr A |
| — | 5  | 2  | Three Violent People          | wes-c A         |
| — | 2  | 2  | Thunder Over Arizona          | wes-c AYC       |
| — | 3  | 3  | Tomahawk Trail                | wes A           |
| — | 4  | 3  | Top Secret Affair             | com A           |
| 4 | 9  | 2  | Toward the Unknown            | dr-c A          |
| — | 10 | 2  | Unguarded Moment, The         | mel-c A         |
| — | 3  | 2  | Utah Blaine                   | wes A           |
| — | 7  | 8  | Vagabond King, The            | mus-dr-c AYC    |
| — | 6  | 5  | Vitelloni (Italian)           | dr A            |
| — | —  | 3  | Walk the Dark Street          | mel A           |
| 8 | 9  | 1  | War and Peace                 | dr-c AYC        |
| 1 | 2  | 3  | We Are All Murderers (French) | dr A            |
| 2 | 9  | 1  | Wee Geordie (British)         | com-c AYC       |
| — | 6  | —  | Westward Ho the Wagons        | wes-c AYC       |
| — | 3  | —  | When Gangland Strikes         | cri-mel A       |
| — | 10 | —  | White Squaw, The              | wes A           |
| — | 3  | 6  | Wicked As They Come (British) | dr A            |
| — | 1  | 10 | Wild Party, The               | cri-mel A       |
| — | 2  | 2  | Windfall in Athens (Greek)    | com AY          |
| 1 | 7  | —  | Wings of Eagles, The          | war-dr-c A      |
| — | 1  | 5  | Woman of Rome (Italian)       | dr A            |
| — | 4  | 5  | Woman's Devotion, A           | mys-mel-c A     |
| 1 | 7  | 3  | Written on the Wind           | dr-c A          |
| — | 1  | 6  | Wrong Man, The                | mys-mel AY      |
| — | 7  | 4  | Yang Kwei Fel (Japanese)      | dr-c AYC        |
| — | 1  | 2  | Yaqui Drums                   | wes AYC         |
| — | 7  | 6  | You Can't Run Away from It    | mus-com-c A     |
| — | 5  | 4  | Young Guns, The               | wes A           |
| — | 3  | —  | Young Stranger, The           | dr AYC          |
| — | 4  | 7  | Zarak                         | mel-c A         |

Reissues (oldtimers you may have seen before) as previously rated in the CR Bulletin indicated:

| A  | B  | C |                                       |                |
|----|----|---|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| 9  | 9  | — | Annie Get Your Gun (Nov. '50)         | mus-com-c A    |
| 1  | 5  | 9 | April in Paris (June '53)             | mus-com-c A    |
| 4  | 10 | 3 | Bend of the River (Aug. '52)          | wes-c AYC      |
| 4  | 13 | — | Big Sky, The (Feb. '53)               | wes-mel A      |
| 4  | 11 | 1 | Broken Arrow (Jan. '51)               | dr-c AYC       |
| 1  | 11 | 5 | Buffalo Bill (Nov. '44)               | wes-biog-c AYC |
| —  | 7  | 5 | Carson City (Nov. '52)                | wes-mel-c AYC  |
| 9  | 9  | — | Cinderella (July '50)                 | mus-car-c AYC  |
| 4  | 11 | 1 | Crash Dive (Dec. '43)                 | war-mel-c AY   |
| 4  | 7  | 5 | Cyrano de Bergerac (June '51)         | dr A           |
| —  | 9  | 3 | Dallaa (July '51)                     | wes-c A        |
| —  | 8  | 5 | Distant Drums (July '52)              | war-mel-c A    |
| 1  | 12 | 3 | Guy Named Joe, A (Aug. '44)           | war-dr A       |
| 6  | 10 | 2 | High Noon (Dec. '52)                  | wes A          |
| 1  | 2  | 7 | Ivanhoe (Jan. '53)                    | nov-c AYC      |
| 2  | 13 | 1 | Killers, The (April '47)              | cri-mel A      |
| 1  | 9  | 4 | Larceny (April '49)                   | mel A          |
| —  | 15 | 1 | Lusty Men, The (May '53)              | mel A          |
| 12 | 4  | 2 | Mister Roberts (Dec. '55)             | war-com-c A    |
| —  | 10 | 6 | One Minute to Zero (Feb. '53)         | war-mel A      |
| —  | 11 | 7 | Rawhide (Sept. '51)                   | wes A          |
| 18 | —  | — | Rebecca (Di. June '40)                | nov A          |
| 1  | 9  | 8 | Rebel Without a Cause (June '56)      | soc-mel-c A    |
| —  | 4  | 6 | Shakedown (April '51)                 | cri-mel A      |
| —  | 11 | 5 | Sleeping City, The (Jan. '51)         | cri-mel A      |
| 9  | 6  | 2 | Spellbound (June '46)                 | dr A           |
| 4  | 14 | — | Stratton Story, The (Nov. '49)        | dr AYC         |
| —  | 9  | 5 | Streets of Laredo (Oct. '49)          | wes-c A        |
| 2  | 11 | 1 | Tall in the Saddle (July '45)         | wes AYC        |
| 10 | 6  | — | Taproots (March '49)                  | dr-c A         |
| —  | 11 | 3 | Ten Tall Men (June '52)               | war-dr-c A     |
| 9  | 6  | — | Third Man, The (July '50)             | cri-mel A      |
| 2  | 9  | 4 | Three Musketeers (May '49)            | dr-c AYC       |
| 1  | 13 | 2 | To the Ends of the Earth (Sept. '48)  | doc-mel AY     |
| 1  | 10 | 4 | Two Years Before the Mast (April '47) | adv AYC        |
| —  | 8  | 7 | Unconquered (June '48)                | hist-c A       |
| —  | 10 | 2 | Walk A Crooked Mile (Apr. '49)        | mel A          |
| 1  | 11 | 5 | Whispering Smith (July '49)           | mel-c AY       |
| 7  | 10 | — | Yearling, The (May '47)               | dr-c AYC       |

## The Consumers' Observation Post

(Continued from page 4)

HOME SEWING is increasing by leaps and bounds, judging from the interest expressed in CR's tests of sewing machines. The high price of ready-made clothing is undoubtedly an important factor giving impetus to the trend. Recently the U.S. Department of Agriculture published figures indicating appreciable savings on women's street dresses and children's dresses made at home. Experiments revealed that ready-to-wear women's dresses priced around \$10 could be made at home for \$5. On children's dresses, the total bill for five ready-to-wear children's dresses was \$21.94, while the cost of similar dresses made at home was \$11.15, and the time spent in making them averaged about 2 hours per dress.

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WHAT DO PATIENTS LIKE ABOUT A DOCTOR? From a survey of a small number of patients, including those in a big city outpatient clinic, a research team from the New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center in New York reported that first of all the people queried liked a particular doctor because of his kindness, understanding, interest, and sympathy; a close second was intelligence, knowledge, skill, and training. In third place was the response that a doctor was liked for the results obtained by his treatments or progress made in curing the patient. Perhaps the family doctor of earlier days who made his daily rounds calling on the sick had some tonic effect apart from the medicine prescribed.

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ALL AUTOMATIC WASHING MACHINES will get clothes clean--in varying degrees. CR's tests reported in January 1957 revealed none that merited a rating of C. Not Recommended. Like all complex modern appliances, however, washers perform better and operate without undue attention from a serviceman if certain fundamental routines are followed. Among the most important listed by Robert Payne, general service manager of the Maytag Company, are: measuring and using soap or detergent according to the manufacturer's directions; avoiding excess use of bleach; making certain that the water pressure is adequate, that water is sufficiently hot and properly softened; avoiding overloading of the machine. Many a service call has been due to a plugged drain hose or one that is kinked, or a baby's sock in the pump. Mr. Payne suggested checking to be sure that the water faucets are turned on, that the lid has been closed, that the timer has not been advanced, and that the washer is properly plugged in, and that a fuse has not blown, before calling a serviceman to work on a balky washer.

\* \* \*

DON'T EAT THE NECK of turkey, capon, or other fowl. A Consumers' Research subscriber, science professor in a Midwestern university, suggested that this warning needed frequent emphasis lest consumers forget that pellets of diethylstilbestrol--an artificial hormone to give birds a plump appearance and make them tender--are implanted supposedly at the base of the skull in a portion that is discarded when the bird is dressed. He noted that cases have been reported of poultry marketed with sizable residues from improperly made implantations several inches below the proper point. Hormone-treated chickens are commonly called caponettes. While it is not definitely known just what effect the eating of hormone residues in poultry has on the normal sex balance of human beings, mink ranchers have discovered that animals fed the necks of treated fowl became sterile.

\* \* \*

AN INTERESTING SYSTEM OF INFORMATIVE LABELING is now being developed in Sweden that aims to supply consumers with a description of the essential characteristics of various products. The specifications to be followed are set by the Institute for Informative Labelling (Varudeklarationsnamnden--VDN) and a symbol is issued for cooperating firms. Each firm that signs an agreement with the VDN may use the symbol on its products without having



them checked in advance. At some time during the first year of use, the Institute buys a number of the products at random in the stores and has them tested by an independent laboratory to make sure that their characteristics conform to the declaration on the label. The label of a quilt, for example, gives the size, the name of the fiber used in the filling, the fact that the cover is rayon sateen, that it has good resistance to sunlight and good resistance to abrasion, advice on how to clean, and the name of the manufacturer. Activities of VDN are financed partly by the government, with contributions from various national organizations, and by the fees paid by business enterprises using the approved symbol. The object is to secure uniform labeling so that consumers can make at least limited comparisons among various brands, although there is no effort made to guarantee any particular standard of quality.

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**TREATMENT OF THE SWIFT-STRIKING CORONARY THROMBOSIS** with the new anti-coagulant drugs is receiving increased support by physicians, although some have expressed reservations about their routine use. In a symposium held in New York last year, one participant pointed out that the use of anti-coagulants has brought a considerable reduction in mortality, and others noted that the availability of vitamin K<sub>1</sub> has considerably reduced dangers from excessive anticoagulation. One participating physician suggested that dietary treatment of patients who had recovered from coronary thrombosis by restricting the amount of cholesterol (present in all animal fats and oils) in the diet might well greatly prolong their survival time.

\* \* \*

**THE POPULARITY OF FILTER-TIP CIGARETTES** has increased the amount of low-quality tobacco used and the prices paid for it. The farmers are understandably delighted, but manufacturers are afraid they will have to raise prices on cigarettes. According to The Wall Street Journal, burley tobacco, which accounts for about 25 percent of tobacco production, is heavier and stronger flavored than the light-colored flue-cured tobacco formerly used in cigarettes. In order to get flavor through the filter, it has been found necessary to mix the lower-grade leaf, that formerly went into pipe and chewing tobacco, with the finer buff-colored bottom leaves. Crop controls hold down the amount of burley that may be raised, and the farmers have decided apparently that they like it that way in view of the increased demand and better returns.

\* \* \*

**CHEMICAL WEED KILLERS** will soon be in widespread use as the garden season arrives and flower beds require attention. There are many kinds available, points out Marston H. Kimball, horticulturist at the University of California, Los Angeles, including soil sterilants, fumigants, contact sprays, and herbicides. He warns that soil sterilants need to be applied with great care since leaching by rain carries the chemicals downward to roots of trees and shrubs which may pick up the toxic material and be damaged. The effect of fumigants, however, is only temporary, and Mr. Kimball reports that no toxic materials from them remain in the soil. Contact weed killers kill only the parts of the plant that are actually sprayed.

\* \* \*

**FOR THAT BALD SPOT IN THE LAWN**, try a strip of polyethylene instead of the traditional gunny sack that is sometimes hard to come by. First, hoe and rake the soil; sow the seed, and pat the earth lightly over the seed. Spray the seedbed thoroughly and cover the soaked area with polyethylene film, anchoring it down with roofing nails spaced about six inches apart, pushed through a double edge of the material. In a very windy locality, it may be necessary to hold the film in place with rocks. The heat retained under the film will help the seeds germinate earlier. Both Sears Roebuck and Montgomery Ward carry polyethylene film by the yard, and a list of suppliers in various parts of the country may be obtained from Spencer Chemical Company, Dwight Building, Kansas City 5, Missouri.



# Phonograph Records

BY WALTER F. GRUENINGER

† Please Note: The first symbol applies to quality of interpretation, the second to fidelity of recording.

**Bach:** *Complete Organ Works*, Vol. IV. Carl Weinrich (organ). Westminster XWN 18260. \$4.98. Clear, crisp, firm playing; wide-range recording of the celebrated *Toccatas and Fugues in D Minor* and *F Major* and two other works. AA AA

**Beethoven:** *Symphony No. 9*. Bayreuth Festival Orchestra under Furtwängler. 4 sides, RCA Victor LM 6043. \$7.96. Recorded at the performance on the re-inauguration of the Bayreuth Festival in August 1951. The fidelity is satisfactory. Furtwängler's is a broad, personal conception which ranks among the finest performances that he has left us. The quartet of singers in the last movement of this Choral Symphony are first rate, consisting of Schwarzkopf, Höngen, Hopf, Edelmann. . . The new Vox PL 10000 offers the symphony conducted by Horenstein on one disk for \$3.98. The fidelity just about matches the Furtwängler set, but the performance, though quite good, is not up to Furtwängler's. But if price is a major factor, this disk will do. . . Furtwängler's and Toscanini's on Victor LM 6009 which includes as side 4 Beethoven's *First Symphony*, are the preferred disks of the Ninth. AA A

**Bernstein:** *Candide*. Adrian, Rounseville, Cook, Petina, etc. Columbia OL 5180. \$5.98. This comic operetta based on Voltaire's satire had a short run on Broadway where the public thought well of the music, poorly of the book. It's one of the best accomplishments of the ubiquitous Leonard Bernstein. The cast isn't always able to do full justice to the music for they lack the technique. You'd have to go to the younger, leading singers at the Met for that. Well recorded. A AA

**Berwald:** *Symphonies Nos. 2 and 3*. Berlin Philharmonic under Markevitch. Decca DL 9853. \$4.98. Initial recording of this Swedish master's work. He was born a year before Schubert. His music reveals elements that might be attributed to Schubert and to Mendelssohn. Played with drama and vigor as befits the music. Well recorded. AA AA

**Charpentier:** *Louise*. Monmart, Laroze, Musy, Michel, etc., under Fournet. 6 sides, Epic SC 6018. \$14.94. Spaciously recorded, first complete performance of this opera which has been performed over a thousand times in Paris. Strong, able direction. The cast is above average and the lovers sound appropriately youthful. But the velvet singing heard from Vallin in the oldish abridged Columbia set EL 7 is absent. A AA

**Chopin:** *Nocturnes*. Nadia Reisenberg (piano). 4 sides, Westminster XWN 18256/7. The complete *Nocturnes*, played here, are the most "Chopinesque" of all compositions. Miss Reisenberg plays accurately and without excessive rubato. But there's more character in Rubinstein on Victor LM 6005 and Novacek on Vox PL 9632 which are satisfactorily engineered, also. A AA

**De Falla:** *Nights in the Garden of Spain* and *El Amor Brujo*. Orchestra des Concerts Lamoureux under Martinon. Epic LC 3305. \$3.98. Warm, convincing, dramatic performance and wide-range recording of this Spanish master's most popular works. Corinne Vozza sings the contralto part in *El Amor* with strong feeling and rich voice. Eduardo del Pueyo skillfully plays the important piano part over-side. AA AA

**Kodaly:** *Hary Janos Suite* & **Stravinsky:** *Le Baiser de la Fée*. RTAS Symphony under Fricsay. Decca DL 9855.

\$4.98. Sensitive, exciting, virtuoso performances of the amusing *Hary Janos Suite* which employs Hungarian folk melodies, and the ballet suite, *The Fairy's Kiss*, inspired by the muse of Tchaikovsky. Rich recording. Thoroughly delightful. AA AA

**Mozart:** *Four Piano Sonatas* (12, 13, 14, 17). Robert Casadesu (piano). Columbia ML 5149. \$3.98. The quality of these sonatas varies but the playing is consistently classical, eloquent, lovely in its lyricism. AA AA

**Ravel:** *Trio in A Minor* & **Fauré:** *Trio in D Minor*. Beaux Arts Trio. MGM E 3455. \$3.98. Announced as first in a series by this group, encompassing the standard trio literature. These typically restrained French works from 1914 and 1923 are skillfully, directly performed. More warmth in recording would enrich the string tone. AA A

**Strauss:** *Till Eulenspiegel* and *Death and Transfiguration*. Vienna Philharmonic under Reiner. RCA Victor LM 2077. \$3.98. Popular Strauss tone poems. *Eulenspiegel* is superbly, imaginatively played. Overside things are more prosaic and the violins lack alluring sheen. My disk is off center. A A

**Tchaikovsky:** *Symphonies 4, 5, 6*. Leningrad Philharmonic under Sanderling and Mravinsky. 6 sides, Decca DXE 142. \$14.98. Performances are musically, highly perceptive, with a few emotional surprises in Mravinsky's readings. Recorded with insufficient bass; Vienna, summer of 1956. Each symphony is available separately. AA A

**Verdi:** *Falstaff*. Gobbi, Schwarzkopf, Barbieri, etc., under von Karajan. 6 sides, Angel 3552 C/L. \$15.94. This comic chamber opera has never attained the popularity of many other Verdi operas, though some regard it as a masterpiece. No great voices here, but dramatically and vocally acceptable, well recorded. Matched against the Toscanini-conducted Victor LM 6111, the Angel is slightly better recorded but the performance falls a little short of the marvelous Toscanini. A A

**Campoli Encores** (violin). London LL 1461. \$3.98. Fourteen tuneful encores often heard in concert halls a generation ago. Campoli's playing is clear and sweet (salon-style) but Heifetz who has recorded some of these pieces brings more distinction to them. A AA

**The Castiliane Maracas Waltz**. Cook 10890. \$4.98. Most fascinating of three disks just released by Cook. Recorded on the scene at Port of Spain. Six hands play colorful waltzes with exciting cross rhythms. AA AA

**Songs You Love**. Elizabeth Schwarzkopf (soprano). Angel 35383. \$4.98. Famous songs by Dvorak, Grieg, Mendelssohn, Hahn, Wolf, etc. Miss Schwarzkopf's singing recalls the clear, white voice of Elizabeth Schumann. Here a few interpretations are static, overcautious, lacking in emotional impact. The enunciation in English is faulty. Best sung are the *lieder* which are marvelous. A AA

**The Music of Walt Disney**. Lawrence Welk and His Champagne Music (orchestra). Coral CRL 57094. \$3.98. A major TV attraction offers "Whistle While You Work," "When You Wish Upon a Star," "The Siamese Cat Song," etc. The beat is strong, the vocalists and instrumental soloists quite satisfactory. AA AA

**The Violinist-Composer**. David Oistrakh (violin). Decca DL 9882. \$4.98. Eight short pieces composed by famous violinists—Ysaye, Wieniawski, Sarasate, Kreisler, etc. How well they are played! AA AA

# Consumers' Research Bulletin

## COMING

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De Soto

Dodge

Pontiac

Rambler

#### Plastic dishes

Boontonware

Branchell

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Holiday by Kenro

Mallo-ware

Russel Wright Residential

Texas Ware

Watertown Lifetime Ware

